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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Regional Cooperation, Israel's Role Discussed

94LD0042A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
31 Mar 94 p 15

[Article by Raghid al-Sulh, a Lebanese political writer and scholar: "The Arab League's Three No's"]

[Text] In the Arab region and some international forums, there is a lively debate about the future of the regional order in the area, including the Middle East and North Africa. The debate is in progress, for the most part, between three groups:

The "Arabism" group is seeking the preservation of the Arab order and action to bring it out of its current conditions and develop it, enabling it to withstand international, regional, and local threats. This group shows a special interest in the Arab League, seeing it as the eventual embodiment of the concept of an Arab regional system. It is the parent organization of all the Arab joint action bodies. This group is thus opposed to the "Middle East market," in which it sees an attempt to create a regional framework for Israeli domination of the area.

The "Middle Eastern" group calls for the replacement of the Arab regional system with another, Middle Eastern one, including both Arabs and Israelis, at first, and perhaps Turks and Iranians later on. This group emphasizes the economic benefits this project would produce and the need for it as a guarantee of the Arab-Israeli peace.

The last group proposes a third way, between these two courses. It seeks global and regional arrangements permitting the Arab system to coexist with the Middle Eastern system and for the Arab League to exist side by side with Middle Eastern joint action organizations that may be founded later. This third group includes some official and unofficial Arab quarters, chiefly the Secretariat General of the Arab League.

In an effort to propagate this point of view, the Secretariat General has prepared a study on the future of joint Arab action and the Middle East market plan, and distributed it to Arab ministers of finance, economy, and foreign affairs. The study showed the great global challenges the Arabs will face in coming years, especially after the signing of the GATT accord, the strengthening of regional or continental cooperation between the countries of the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the efforts being made by the seven large powers to solve the unemployment problem in the industrialized countries. The study concluded by reaffirming the importance of regional cooperation in its Arab and Middle Eastern portions.

In addition, in the course of testifying to the integrity of the third group's point of view, the secretary general, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, has made statements dealing with

the question of the Middle East market, in which he set forth the major ideas advanced by proponents of the idea of an Arab-"Middle Eastern" intermarriage, confirming the practicality of their plan and its rightness. 'Abd-al-Majid's point of view here can be summarized in the three following Arab "no's":

- No privileges given to Israel after the settlement, nor any Israeli control in the context of the Middle East plan, because "it is no more than a tiny dot in the world, with limited resources and surrounded by an Arab world that has great possibilities," and "the Arabs are not naive; they will not accept terms imposed upon them or for Israel to have special status in this market."
- No fear of a Middle East market on the part of the Arab order. "The future belongs to the Arab League because it is the expression of the sole Arab identity and the image of the community united by a single culture of values and traditions, by a single geographic expanse and shared history."
- "No force or coercion in dealing with Israel." The Arab countries are sovereign entities and alone will define the way in which they will deal with the Israelis, according to their national interests.

The picture drawn by Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid's "no's" should be welcomed by those keen to preserve the continuation of the Arab regional order. It strengthens their confidence in the future, and their hope of developing the maintenance of their resources and their use in achieving a comprehensive renaissance in the region. This is the appearance. In substance, however, the position of the League's secretary general seems to back the point of view of the "Middle Eastern" group. How and why?

Protecting the regional Arab order from extinction requires us to define accurately the challenges it will face, and alerting official and unofficial Arab circles to their existence and their true extent, and the citizen of their effect on the Arabs. We must also define the methods by which we may confront and respond to these challenges, starting with action to unite the Arabs' forces to achieve this goal and firmly establish the collective Arab personality and revive the institutions through which it speaks. The Middle Easterners, by contrast, are seeking to keep Arab public opinion from fully comprehending these threats, so that they can ram their plan through without opposition to speak of, and with as little effort as possible. In this context, the Middle East market plan is offered as if it were a plan for coexistence rather than domination. It is, as one Arab active in politics has described it, a policy of "impoverish and rule." The positions of the Secretariat General of the Arab League give encouragement to the Middle Easterners when they ignore the threats surrounding the Arab world, and ignore the difference between what they hope for, and what actually is; between what is the Arabs' natural right, and actual reality.

Reality says that Israel may lack some raw materials and may rely on outside aid, as stated in the study the

Secretariat General distributed to Arab officials, but it makes up for this shortcoming in many ways. It is an industrial country, while most Arab countries are still agricultural societies. Its national income is greater than that of most of its neighbors. Israel is more advanced than the Arabs in the industries of the future as well as in agriculture. Its needs for water, energy, raw materials, and investments do not reduce its superiority over the Arabs; Japan is no less in need of energy resources than is Israel, and Holland is no less lacking in raw materials; yet these defects have not hurt these two countries' economies. It may not be said of Holland that it is an insignificant country just because it has a small population, nor because its area is limited, or because it is compelled to import raw materials from abroad.

What is now proposed is that all doors be thrown open to bilateral relations between Israel and the countries of the Arab and Islamic region, to weaken the types of Arab joint action and collective bilateral Arab action. More bluntly, it is proposed that Israel and the Western countries deal with Arab countries on the basis of purely bilateral relations. The "Middle East market project" is the outward aspect of this reality. It is an outer facade that conceals an image that puts Israel into the center of the region and its economic, political, and military "core area." The Arab countries, on the other hand, become subject to the center, carrying out its policies and plans. We sensed this concept of the future at the Madrid conference, when Israel, and the conference sponsors, rejected the idea of a unified Arab delegation. Israel took steps, even in the smallest details, to weaken coordination among the Arab delegations, staying in scattered places to make cooperation and consultation among them difficult. These possibilities strengthen Israel's position economically, politically, and militarily, at the expense of the Arab countries, and allow it to gain economic prerogatives, and distinctive political roles, contrary to the hopes and plans of the League's secretary general.

These projects are not our predestined fate. It is the Arabs' right, and it is within their ability, to resist them and to rebuild their lost unity, to strengthen their national unity, and to proceed along the path of prosperity; acting, at the same time, to contain the danger of Israeli expansionism and hegemonistic ambitions, which Israeli leaders do not even hide. This course of Arab and international action requires hard and persistent work with which energetic Arab forces are familiar, and continual movement to change the regional and international status quo, which tends to tilt the balance in favor of Israel. The Secretariat does not ignore this aspect; on the contrary, it gives it high priority among its concerns, and calls for Arab reconciliation, the revival of Arab solidarity, and the reactivation of its institutions. The Secretariat is not calling for the realization of this goal in a merely formal way; it has combined the call with practical action, ongoing contacts, and palpable effort in order to overcome the obstacles in its way. Therefore the Secretariat has certain knowledge of the extent of the

fragmentation ailing the Arab world, and the policies that are aimed at turning the fracture that has plagued the Arab body politic in the 1990's into a permanent state and stable condition to help in redrawing the identity of the region and redrawing the map. When the Arabs were in that condition, comparison among them was as if they were a single power "with great possibilities" confronting Israel "with limited resources"—this comparison does not stand on firm ground, and leads to erroneous conclusions. It spreads feelings of torpor and apathy in the Arab spirit, when what we need to do is to give the Arabs incentives to emerge from this condition.

The hope is that the Arabs will be free, as Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said, to draw their regional and international policies, and to choose, without compulsion or coercion, their own way of dealing with their neighbors, to define their position toward their enemy purely in accordance with their own interests. The reality, is however, entirely different. Israel was imposed on the Arabs by force, and the Arabs lost the Arab lands occupied in 1967 through war. They were compelled to attend the Madrid conference under force of threat. The coercion was the outcome of the pro-Israel Western powers' insistence on guaranteeing Israel's supremacy over the Arabs, individually and as a group. Will this policy change if the Arabs accept the Middle Eastern market?

The great powers, keen to guarantee Israel's superiority in war and military confrontations, and in support of its role as policeman of the Middle East, will work on securing its superiority over the Arabs on the economic scene as well. They will enable it to obtain broad privileges at the expense of the Arabs so it can play the role of regional agent for Western interests. Apart from that, Israel itself will not hesitate to use its overwhelming military superiority over the Arabs to obtain economic and political privileges in the region. The coercion and compulsion used against the Arabs today to get them to end the Arab boycott of Israel, for free, with no reasonable justification, convinces us of this.

The Arab League's Council, which met in Cairo in September 1993, did not agree to end any of the levels of the Arab boycott of Israel. This was confirmed by Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid in his statement in January of this year, when he said that the boycott would continue "because the reasons for its original imposition still exist." This position was quickly changed, and the boycott reviewed by the Arab League itself, even though the reasons for which it was imposed still existed. Why? Because the U.S. secretary of commerce asked that the issue be put on the Council's agenda, and because "the American administration is determined to end the Arab economic boycott of Israel," as U.S. Vice President Al Gore told the annual convention of AIPAC [American-Israel Public Affairs Committee] in Washington. If this is not compulsion and coercion, then what is? If the change is not proof and evidence of the distinctive role being prepared for Israel in the framework of the "Middle East market" plan, then what proof does the Arab League Secretariat need, to be convinced that what is needed is to inform Arab public opinion of the risks of this plan, rather than to minimize it?

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Saudi Banks Donate to Jerusalem Holy Sites

94AF0144B *Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic*
7 Mar 94 p 8

[Article by Sami al-Muhanna: "Saudi Banks Begin to Receive Donations for Jerusalem"]

[Text] Riyadh—Official and popular circles in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in the Arab and Islamic countries have responded to the call issued by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, to launch a popular donation campaign throughout the Kingdom to restore and rescue the Islamic holy sites in the venerable Jerusalem.

This initiative is part of the commendable efforts exerted by the Kingdom to support the Palestinian cause and to safeguard Islamic holy sites in the venerable Jerusalem.

The custodian of the two holy mosques has instructed Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, governor of Riyadh Province and chairman of the Popular Committee to Aid Palestinian Strugglers, to take charge of the popular donations campaign throughout the Kingdom.

Prince Salman has addressed a touching appeal to the Saudi people and to all Arab and Muslim citizens and residents, urging them to contribute effectively and to donate generously.

For this purpose, Prince Salman has established a unified account at all of the Kingdom's banks in order to facilitate the reception of donations.

Thirteen popular committees in the venerable Mecca, luminous Medina, Riyadh, Jeddah, al-Dammam, Abha, al-Qasim, al-Hasa, al-Ta'if, 'Ar'ar, al-Kharj, Tabuk, and al-Khafji have begun to receive citizens' donations that are flowing into banks during bank work hours from 0900-1400 and from 2100-0030. The banks will manage the donation accounts and will submit periodic reports on the progress of the campaign to Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz.

In a related development, 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Jamus, director of the Kingdom's offices of the Popular Committees to Aid Palestinian Strugglers, has made special statements to express his pride in King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz's noble initiative, saying, "We believe that this call will receive an immediate and prompt response from the Kingdom's citizens, especially since the campaign is led by Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, who has been chairman of the Popular Committee to Aid Palestinian Strugglers since 20 Dhu al-Qa'dah 1387 of the Hegira, corresponding to 1968. Donations have amounted to more than 1.5 billion riyals since this

committee was created. The Kingdom's citizens have contributed and members of the Palestinian community in the Kingdom, both those working in the government and in the private sector, have donated 5 percent of their salaries.

Palestinian Investment in West Bank, Gaza

94AF0144A *Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic*
7 Mar 94 p 8

[Text] The heinous massacre perpetrated by radical Jews at the Ibrahimi Mosque [Tomb of the Patriarchs] has come at a time when Palestinians have been in a race with time to establish institutions that will manage the Palestinian economy. Even though this incident represents a setback for the peace process, it clearly reflects the importance of accelerating the creation of these institutions so Palestinians can prove that they are capable of managing their daily economic life without intervention by the occupation authorities, keeping in mind that it has been decided that the Israeli administration will hand over the Gaza and Jericho territories on 13 April 1994.

The core of the Palestinian economic institutions is the Palestinian Economic Development and Reconstruction Agency [PEDRA], which has been operating temporarily from offices at Jerusalem's Seven Arches Hotel since mid-January, when its directors were appointed. In the occupied territories, PEDRA is headed by Hasan Abu-Lubdah, the deputy executive director for the occupied territories.

PEDRA departments consist of a projects department, a finance department, an economic policy department, and a department to select projects and to link non-governmental projects with technical aid.

The administrative director is Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-'Ala', who is the PLO Finance Department chairman. He is headquartered outside the occupied territories. The agency's deputy executive director is Sari Nusaybah, a professor at Bi'r Zayt University.

The agency's main task is to create institutions. This entails establishing contacts with the World Bank and with other international aid-supplying organizations to get their approval for the appropriate structure to manage the \$2 billion in aid that the world community has promised to provide.

Agency officials emphasize that the agency is independent. Abu-Lubdah has said that the agency will do more than just spend money and that it is not just a channel through which financiers deliver their funds.

The agency's final internal structure has not been announced to date. It is expected that the arrangements will include two main departments that cover project management and sector management. The first will be

entrusted with accounts and auditing and the second will cover the sectors concerned with education and with project evaluation.

The agency's communications will be handled by international advisers who can submit regular reports to aid-providing organizations, because the primary concern of these organizations is clarity and feasibility. Even though the agency wishes to be independent, lenders say that it will not control the current financial aid infusions, but that it will select the projects and will prevent the entanglement of technical aid. As for the financial aspect of awarded contracts, it will be within the jurisdiction of the aid-providing countries.

One of the agency's fundamental tasks is to draft the new administration's budget for the first five years. This was agreed at a meeting held in Paris between the advisory group representing the aid-providing parties and the Palestinians on 28 January 1994.

The agency has set the 1994 budget at nearly \$268 million. This includes the wages of 22,000 civil employees who will take over responsibility from the Israeli administration. The budget also covers the expenses of new agencies, such as the police force, which is expected to consist of 8,000 members. A sum of \$137 million will be provided for special expenditures, which will not show up in the annual budget, because this sum is designated for the preliminary expenses of creating the administrative authority. This sum also covers a program to rehabilitate prisoners and provide jobs. It is expected that the budget deficit will amount to \$158 million. The aid-providing parties have pledged to cover 75 percent of this deficit.

It is also expected that excess funds will be channeled toward special expenditures rather than current expenditures.

Moreover, it is expected that the administration will collect revenues of \$250-\$300 million in taxes to cover current expenditures and will resort to domestic borrowing to balance the budget.

An important priority will be to set up a tax-collection authority to take over from the Israeli administration on 13 April 1994.

PEDRA has been criticized by the aid-providing countries for its failure to create a tax-collection authority fast enough. PEDRA has to deal with this issue promptly.

In addition to PEDRA, plans have been announced recently to create a Palestinian development organization to develop economic ideas.

Nabil Qassis, one of PEDRA's directors, is drafting a plan for this organization that will operate independently of PEDRA and that will compile data on trade, currency, financial issues, and labor issues. This organization will also have a department to evaluate projects.

The plans to establish this organization have received financing from the World Bank and have been accepted by the aid-providing countries. Middle East affairs specialists at the World Bank have said that this organization will work side-by-side with PEDRA and with the Palestinian Statistics Bureau, headquartered in Damascus.

A preliminary plan has been drafted to set up a Palestinian development bank, and it awaits the approval of PLO Executive Council Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. The bank, expected to have a capital of \$200 million, will be an independent establishment.

ALGERIA

Dialogue With FIS; Government 'Irresponsibility'

94AF0149B Algiers EL WATAN in French
20 Mar 94 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Abdelhak Benhamouda, secretary general of the General Union of Algerian Workers, by Ahmed Ancer; place and date not given: "If the State Does Not Assume Its Responsibility, the Law of the Strongest Will Prevail"; first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] Speaking at a particularly complex and difficult juncture, the secretary general of the UGTA [General Union of Algerian Workers], Abdelhak Benhamouda, does not mince words in describing the behavior of the political class.

[Ancer] What is your analysis of the current political situation?

[Benhamouda] To make an analysis, there must be a political situation—with at least some data—to analyze. I think that we are going through a bad spell, so we can only speak of an observation. It may be objective or subjective. But there is a reality.

For my part, I am one of those very numerous Algerians who defend the state. It is the state which, by being strong, takes charge of defending the country and protecting the citizens and their property. But what we are seeing is the total absence of the state. We also see that the people who used to talk about democracy, dialogue, "rahma" [compassion], tolerance, and human rights are the ones now defending criminals, terrorists, killers, and assassins.

We see total silence on the part of the public authorities, the so-called political class, and the human rights associations while hundreds of Algerians have been murdered just during this month of Ramadan.

Even more serious, we see, as though by coincidence, that in a sector of the press known to be the tool of the terrorists and the former FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], the roles have been reversed: the real victims are presented as terrorists, while the real terrorists become the

victims. There is something worse than that. Newspapers that are supposed to defend the republic and democracy have recently been turned into tools of the former FIS.

We have the impression, and it is also a profound feeling, that the only one concerned by this struggle is the citizen: the unarmed civilian. I often hear it said: "Where is civil society? We have no people, no citizens." But I ask two questions. The first is addressed to the public authorities. Why is the state, which disarmed the citizens, now asking them to stand up to unscrupulous criminals? Doesn't the state exist to ensure their safety? Unless it is incapable of doing so! We draw the following conclusions from such a situation: people are telling themselves that if the state cannot live up to its obligations, then the citizens are entitled to defend themselves by their own means.

For six years, the political class has been abusing and terrorizing the people. Now, despite that, even the parties that protect or justify terrorism, thus ensuring it of political cover, are being threatened because of contradictory interests.

The political class, whether in power or—in quotes—the "opposition," is asking where civil society is. Judging from the case of Ait Ahmed, civil society does not even have the right to defend itself. Unless it is supposed to wait for "Mehdi al-Montazer" [Hidden Imam] to come from Lausanne and defend it.

The problem at present is that the overwhelming majority of Algerians are threatened, not just the members of the security services or the people expressing political stands. The terrorists are now murdering women, little girls, old men and women, workers, teachers, peasants, the unemployed, and so on. They are burning down schools, food units, industrial complexes, and so on.

In short, they are destroying the entire country. Where is the concern on the part of the so-called opposition parties over such a situation? Where is action by the state in the face of such monstrous crimes? It should be pointed out in this connection that it is not the state that is hunting down terrorists. It is the latter who are, for example, assaulting a Gendarmerie station and organizing attacks in various places. But if they do not do anything, they are not disturbed.

It is for all those reasons that the public is looking for the best way to protect itself on its own. Mass action must achieve two objectives: it must not be co-opted for the benefit of the mafia still existing within the apparatuses, and at the same time, it must strengthen the state's action. This is important because if we step outside the framework of the state, we become outlaws, and then no one will be governing anyone. We hope that those limits will not be exceeded, especially now that dialogue is being resumed.

[Ancer] What exactly is your opinion of the results of that dialogue?

[Benhamouda] In my opinion, it is more a matter of concessions. For example, every time there are clemency measures, the response by the terrorists is hundreds of Algerians being executed. The last time it happened—when leaders of the former FIS were released—the terrorists carried out the spectacular operation at Tazoult Prison. Judging from the information available so far, it seems unlikely that only two guards were in on it.

[Ancer] Does this mean you are thinking of high-level accomplices?

[Benhamouda] Yes! You will notice that no one has accepted responsibility, just as no one has resigned to at least keep up appearances. The political situation constitutes a whole. It is not limited to the management of security or to dialogue, which we do not believe in, at least not in the way that it is being conducted.

There is not even any communication. Take the example of the negotiations with the IMF. All anybody knows is that individuals are in Washington. But we know nothing about what they are doing. Public opinion is not being informed. There is not even a communique, despite the fact that the country's future is bound up with the results of those negotiations.

[Ancer] What do you think of dialogue "with none excluded" as reaffirmed this Friday by Liamine Zeroual?

[Benhamouda] It is a problem. For myself, I understand it this way: there are people who feel responsible for the blood that is flowing because it is not compulsory to blame the one causing it—the one doing the killing. Responsibility is placed on the politician who pushed the terrorist groups to kill.

Let us accept that no one is to be excluded. Thousands of Algerians have been victims of the terrorists. They have ties with hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of relatives and friends who are demanding justice. So there is a blood problem to be solved. We can talk about dialogue "with none excluded," but only after resolving the matter of the blood that has been shed, and every terrorist must pay. If that portion of the public that still believes in the state and in legality does not obtain justice, it will rebel.

It seems to me that the people who think it is possible to have dialogue without excluding anyone in order to solve the problems of terrorism and security do not live in Algeria or in Algerian society.

So they are greatly mistaken. It seems to me that there is a lot of manipulation going on, and what is more serious, we resent the fact that they are trying to present us with a fait accompli. Whichever group is acting in that manner is moving in the wrong direction.

[Ancer] It is the women who are reacting now to the disturbing situation in the country. How can one explain what could be called hesitation on the part of the UGTA at such a serious moment?

[Benhamouda] It is not a matter of hesitation, and we have our positions. It must not be forgotten that our organization has suffered many attacks aimed at destabilizing and destroying it on the grounds that the central union and Benhamouda in particular are engaging in politics and ignoring union activity. That is certainly false. There is no hesitation. We are observing the course of events.

[Ancer] We asked that question because at several important moments in the life of our country, especially when the CNSA [National Committee for the Safeguard of Algeria] was being established and when preparations were being made for the march on 22 March 1993, the UGTA played a leading role. And now Algeria is experiencing a very dangerous situation.

[Benhamouda] The UGTA has stepped back and is observing. So far no one has made a move. No one has lifted a finger or denounced or condemned anything. There are no longer even any notices of condolences in the newspapers. That just shows how far cowardice has gone. Some political parties do not express those condolences even to the families of their own murdered members. Let us talk about 22 March, when millions of people took to the streets in response to the call from the UGTA and other associations. They did not do so to make social demands despite the very difficult living conditions of the workers and other groups. They were all chanting slogans about halting terrorism and halting the assassination of Algeria. They were all demanding a state of law, a republic with its values, freedom, pluralism, democracy, and so on.

For my part, I do not know exactly who heads the FFS [Socialist Forces Front], and it does not concern me. But in any case I do not understand why somebody named Khellil, speaking from the rostrum at a general meeting by his party, is targeting me in particular. Those who target the UGTA say that we are in the pay of the government. They have accused us of being responsible for halting the election process, the action that caused Chadli's downfall. Some people make a living from lies. If we supported Chadli's government, how did it happen that we played a part in bringing it down?

On the question of dialogue, the UGTA took clear positions, regardless of whether it was talking to the HCE [Higher State Council] or the commission, even to the point of saying that all the window dressing had to be removed. Because if the window dressing is not removed, people will not be able to see who is pulling the strings behind the scenes. We wanted to know where the real power was. That is the UGTA which, speaking through its secretary general, denounces the government, the symbols of corruption, and the mafia.

So where is the hesitation? The UGTA does not want political power, too. The workers are suffering, but despite that their first concern is the fate of Algeria. It is not our problems but the defense of the country that is

taking center stage. We could have adopted a negative attitude, considering the seriousness of the problems in the world of labor.

We might have been tempted to struggle for power so that even if we were unable to take it, we could still break the country and make everyone equal in misery. But no, our concern has always been to help make the state of law a reality.

There are certain things that I am not going to talk about because I do not want to demoralize people. Let us talk instead about the state. In the government departments and state enterprises, people are going back to the beard and "kamis" [shirt]. They stop work and go off supposedly to say their prayers. In some mosques—I am not talking about the interior of the country but about Algiers—virulent speeches with invectives and insults are reappearing. This is true even on television, where the sermons have been just as virulent as those by the terrorists during this Ramadan. Despite all that, no one has eyes and ears for anything except the UGTA.

[Ancer] The negative view is actually not the only one. People look to the central union because it remains the only organization with nationwide influence.

[Benhamouda] I was getting to that. Although from the organizational standpoint, everything is relative. That being said, our concern is to make people appear as they really are. Now that we have had the communique from the president, we will see how the political parties react. As far as we are concerned, we have done all we could. But there is manipulation.

[Ancer] Are you afraid of attempts at co-optation, as happened following the marches in March 1993?

[Benhamouda] There is always manipulation. That is why it is absolutely necessary to establish a genuine and permanent popular movement. In the second place, there are a lot of volunteers. If the state wants that to be legal, let it hand out weapons. Otherwise people will get them some other way. Any popular political movement that matters must be able to protect itself. If the state takes charge of the security problem, people will organize peacefully. If the state does not accept its responsibilities, the law of the strongest will prevail /tag aala men tag/. [preceding words published in Arabic]

[Ancer] But in that case there would be civil war—it would mean something terrible happening to the country!

[Benhamouda] We do not want it. We do not want it. That is why I say over and over that only the state has the right to use force. I have always said that. But if the state does not use its strength to defend the citizens, who is going to do so—who is going to defend the innocent? We have not reached any decision.

We are in the process of getting together as union leaders to consider how to go about it. Because after all, if you are going to die, you should certainly take your enemy

with you. We need to keep in mind the kinds of atrocities they are committing. The terrorists went to the home of a gendarme, and when they could not find him, they killed his wife and sister-in-law. They kill women and a 14-year-old girl. They kill people in front of innocent children. How long are we going to put up with that?

If we get to that point, there will no longer be political parties or personalities. It will be every man for himself. We cannot just stand around with our arms crossed. Who are we waiting for?

Who? The tragedy of this country is that one person uses history and another uses religion to say: "I am a party." Then a third person comes along with neither troops nor trumpet and speaks in the name of the Algerian people on who knows what authority to exclude civil society at a time when intellectuals are living in hiding in their own country. So the state must accept its responsibilities in order to avoid civil war. There must not be a return to the practices of the HCE, in which there is dialogue with parties that justify terrorism by insulting everyone. We have already wasted a year and a half for nothing. We have already paid. And if we have to pay even more, will we not be tempted to burn the country down? People have suffered too much. Some, like Guendouzi, have died with their wages suspended. It is possible to play with everything except people's lives. The right to life is sacred.

Concerning the women who have decided to rally in front of the ONDH [National Human Rights Organization], they could just as well have done so in front of the office of the president or some other important institution. In my opinion, they chose the ONDH because human rights associations exist to defend terrorists, murderers, and criminals. I do not recall any communique from an association calling for the enforcement of court decisions.

But that is a right. The same is true of health at a time when hundreds of threatened physicians have fled the country, but we have not heard anything from the human rights associations on that subject. In my opinion, that is the symbolism of the women's choice. They are defending the right to life in order to arouse people's consciences. If there is no response, it will mean that there is no more conscience.

Minister of Industrial Restructuring Discusses Role

LD2204005794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 21 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The Ministry of Industrial Restructuring and Participation came into existence with the new government formation. As soon as it was announced that this ministry was entrusted to Mourad Benachenhou, the minister of economy in the former government and the one who engineered the agreement with the IMF, the media and the general trade union rushed and said that it was a ministry of privatization.

Mourad Benachenhou, who was today's guest on the Algerian Radio 3 Transitions program, tried to dismiss this idea and pointed out that his ministry was charged with a mission that had a character of conception and analysis of the current situation of the industrial, distribution, and tourism sectors. Our colleague Benahmimed has more details.

[Begin Benahmimed recording] Mr. Benachenhou stressed that his ministry would carry out the duty of putting forward proposals on the ways and means of restructuring these sectors and increasing their productivity level. [passage omitted]

Mr. Michel Camdessus, the director general of the IMF, at the opening of the spring session of the annual general meeting of the World Bank and the IMF talked about the agreements signed lately, including the Algerian model. In this context, Mr. Camdessus described the Algerian Government's program for economic revival as strong and stressed the activating role of the IMF in giving incentives for the necessary financing in order to bring about this revival.

France yesterday announced once again, through Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, its solidarity with Algeria. Juppe also expressed his country's satisfaction with the fact that the other European partners expressed the same. He mentioned that there is a spontaneous European initiative stipulating that 150 million ECUs [European currency units] will be granted to Algeria. [end recording]

Communications Minister Defends Freedom of the Press

LD0305231894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 3 May 94

[Text] Today's main event in the world is the International Day of Freedom of the Press. The event is important given the number of measures, some with tragic consequences, facing journalists throughout the world.

The French watchdog group Reporters Sans Frontieres has announced that more than 60 journalists have been killed throughout the world since the New Year. The American Freedom House Society has asserted that, despite the gains made by journalists throughout the world, hurdles facing freedom of the press continue to exist in more than 100 countries.

In Algeria, in addition to the aforementioned pressures, journalists have been facing the risk of assassination; 14 of our colleagues have been victims of the violence in our country.

On this occasion Mr. Mohamed Benamar Zerhouni, minister of communications, today made the following statement to the national radio:

[Begin Zerhouni recording] I cannot, on this symbolic occasion, but offer my prayers to all those who have been slain as they were carrying out their noble mission. Indeed, they were some of the best people who gave their life trying to do their job the best possible.

I would like also to salute and pay respect to their colleagues, be it journalists or other workers in the communication sector, and in particular those who have been tirelessly defending the profession of journalism and its freedom despite their personal suffering and other obstacles. Given all this, I cannot but stand by their side to condemn everything that might harm the freedom of expression and personal sacrosanct rights. [end recording]

The minister took this opportunity to invite all journalists to organize themselves through their own trade unions:

[Begin Zerhouni recording] I would like to take this opportunity to call upon all publishers of newspapers and other publications, as well as all members of the two wings of the national press, to join in trade unions where they will be bonded by their common interest. Once such unions are set up, people who will truly represent them in their open, continuous, and frank dialogue with public authorities will emerge. [end recording]

Loans for Water Projects Announced

LD0704143594 Algiers ENTV Television Network
in Arabic 1200 GMT 7 Apr 94

[Text] Water is life. Irrigation in our country requires stimulation, such as modernizing drinking water networks and building dams and other projects.

The time is ripe and a loan is coming at the right time. In the meeting of the provinces' irrigation directors, an official at the Equipment Ministry reported on foreign financing estimated at \$1.025 billion. Ahmed Megache has the details:

[Megache] Financing of irrigation projects in Algeria estimated at \$1.025 billion in the form of loans was revealed yesterday by an official at the Equipment Ministry before the national meeting of the directors of irrigation.

The same source pointed out that the irrigation sector has been benefiting for years from foreign financial aid, particularly provided by the institutions of the International Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, and Arab funds.

As the ministry official pointed out, previous financing was devoted to building dams and networks for supplying drinking water in many provinces and purification for three main cities—Algiers, Oran, and Constantine—in addition to the water purification project in Boumerdes province.

The ministry official added that this financing also affected the modernization of the drinking water networks of 10 provinces, with a loan from the International Bank valuing \$110 million.

As for the financing of the International Bank for Development, it would be devoted to the modernization of 24 water purification stations, completing studies on the effect on the ocean, and strengthening the potentials of the water agencies throughout the country.

EGYPT

Future Israeli Relations Considered

New Alliances Anticipated

94LD0040A Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic
26 Mar 94 p 6

[Article by Wajih Abu-Zikra: "Hegemony or Peace Israeli-Style"]

[Text] Professor Ibrahim Sa'dah has posed, in his article, "Welcome to the Challenge," a highly significant, momentous, and insightful question: What will be Egypt's position if Israel realizes its dreams of a new "warm" peace with all the Arabs, as distinct from the "cold" peace with Egypt?

I believe the answer to this question will be the linchpin of political action in the near future, and for years to come. In order for the answer to the question to be efficacious, I believe AKHBAR AL-YAWM, in cooperation with a research organization, should hold a conference in which Egypt's scientists and political and intellectual leaders take part in adopting a "strategic Egyptian plan" for facing the coming challenge. The plan would include a method for managing the "coming peace struggle" primarily in Egyptian, and, secondarily, in Arab terms. Every party to the conflict has its own vision of the post-peace phase.

Israel: Israel sees, in this peace, the second phase of Israel's evolution. The first phase was the establishment of the state itself; it was established, and expanded gradually, to enter into the phase of hegemony over the region. This was proclaimed by Ben-Gurion in the 1950s, to be a regulation for all the Israeli leaders who came after him, doves and hawks alike. Ben-Gurion said, "Peace is essential for Jewish genius to gain control over Arab money and Arab labor, in order for this genius to put both (money and labor) to the best use." Israel began early to initiate studies, research, and projects preparatory to the peace phase. Israeli espionage agencies and research institutions specialized in studying and gathering information about Arab capabilities in all areas. I may mention one interesting incident that occurred at the book fair. Specialized national councils exhibited volumes containing Egyptian scientists' views on internal Egyptian affairs, on housing, agriculture, Nile water, and livestock, in addition to issues of extremism and defiance. The Embassy of Israel alone bought more than one copy of each volume, to make use of them in post-peace planning.

Israel keeps silent about "cooperation in the context of peace," as well as about its maneuvers in international finance organizations. Despite that, some studies on the Israeli concept of peace have emerged from the realm of secrecy. There was—one of countless examples—the outcome of an economic conference held at the University of Tel Aviv entitled "Economic Cooperation in the Middle East, From a Dream to Reality." Hayyim Ben-Shahar urged this and included it in a book published in London in 1989, called *Economic Cooperation in the Middle East*. In the view of that conference:

Israel suffers from a water shortage, and the water surpluses of the Nile River, the Litani River in Lebanon, and al-Yarmuk River [in Jordan] are being lost to evaporation. The conference view was of Israel's "need" to benefit from these waters.

The conference proposed the extension of the Tapline to Haifa; this junction would be 40 percent cheaper than traversing the Suez Canal.

They speak of developing Arab-on-Arab wars, and linking them to the Israeli arms trade.

Israel has submitted several Middle East development projects to the World Bank, on condition that they involve more than one country in the region, with Jewish "genius" being the key point of each. The projects included water transport, electricity transport, the establishment of ports, the extension of railroads, and a network of roads linking Israel and the Arab states.

Israel's problem is that the pivotal Israel philosophy in regional cooperation is hegemony.

The Oil Arabs: After Saddam's invasion of Kuwait and the fact that some Arab countries supported the invasion, and the PLO's support for that cruel attack, there was a radical change, and a 180 degree turn in the minds of the "oil Arabs." They renounced Arabism; they renounced the Palestinian cause; they imagined that Israel was closer to them and easier to take than their "treacherous Arab neighbor." Israel, they imagined, was a powerful country, capable of offering them help and protection against the perfidiousness of friends and brothers. With the encouragement of the United States, they secretly rushed to Israel to sign trade deals and get their sick treated in Israeli hospitals. The Israeli press has even begun to call Hadasah Hospital the Rich Arab Patients Hospital. Israel has respected the Arabs' wish for secrecy in their visits and cooperation. Then there was the Gaza-Jericho agreement, dispensing even with the fig leaf, with the beginning of a phase of openness and pride in the agreement and visits to Israel. We began to read, in Gulf newspapers, about the need to nullify the Arab boycott of Israel at all its levels. Trade with Israel has begun in many Gulf countries, and all this has begun even before a comprehensive peace or the return of the occupied Arab land. The thing that defies human understanding is that one "revolutionary" Arab country, rejects the Gaza-Jericho agreement and Camp David and all forms of negotiations with the Israeli "enemy."

This country got Israel to produce water pipes for one of its huge water projects, and oil pipelines too; Israeli factories are working night and day to meet that country's needs.

The Palestinians: I was utterly surprised at the Palestinians' ebullient feelings about 'Arafat's outstretched hand and Rabin's hesitant one at the White House festivities for the signing of the Gaza-Jericho accord. Then the Palestinians began a free-for-all to announce Palestinian-Israeli cooperation to the Israeli media. "Combatant" Palestinian leaders thrust themselves in front of Israeli television cameras to talk about "the friendly Israeli people." I felt that the Palestinians and the Israelis were speaking one language in which I was not fluent—which I did not even understand; that they were on the same side, against the Egyptian concept of peace. Our peace, in the opinion of Prof. Ibrahim Sa'dah, is a cold peace, while the Israelis and Palestinians have a torrid peace! As if what has happened over the last half century was a mere tempest in a teacup; as if we had just been meddling in someone else's business all that time. I was even more surprised when I heard one of the leaders of the Palestinian "struggle" use an expression that nauseated me, saying that "Israel is an honorable enemy; the Arabs are treacherous friends."

The Syrians: Some of them believe the Syrian presence in Lebanon is far more important and beneficial than the Syrian presence on the Golan, because the Golan—as one of them put it—is a desolate area, whereas Lebanon is Syria's true outlet to the Mediterranean Sea; thus any peace accord requiring the Syrians to stay out of Lebanon would be unacceptable, even if it liberated the Golan.

This is a brief look at Israel's dreams, and of the Arab political circus, which gives special importance to writer Ibrahim Sa'dah's big question: What will be Egypt's position if Israel realizes its dreams of a new "warm" peace with all the Arabs, as distinct from the "cold" peace with Egypt?

Yes, Egypt.

Egypt today is demanding a correction in the Arabs' course, their attention to detail, and some understanding on the part of those who are rushing blindly toward Israel. Only Egypt will stand by the Arabs; only Egypt will stand against Israeli hegemony in the region; only Egypt will turn hegemony into cooperation between partners. Hence my proposal at the beginning of this article, about the need for the questioner to hold a scientific conference in which we would call upon Egyptian genius to set us an Egyptian strategy for managing the coming peace struggle.

Yes, through that conference we would get a plan for rebuilding this region on new bases, or, in other words, a "strategy for thwarting Israel's plan for hegemony," especially as Egypt has intellectual, human, geographical, and material resources greater than Israel's, and these scattered resources must be gathered into a single order

so that we need not fear cooperation with Israel. This proposal could be submitted to the Arab nation at an Arab summit, as Prof. Ibrahim Sa'dah asked. We would commit ourselves to it and then, subsequently, enter into regional cooperation with Israel—after it has withdrawn from the occupied territories.

I give warning that without a plan, and Arab solidarity with it, and commitment to it, then Israeli dominance is on the way—no doubt about it.

Israel's Economic Goals Questioned

94LD0040B Cairo AL-YASAR in Arabic Mar 94 pp 4-5

[Article by Husayn 'Abd-al-Razzaq: "The Party of Camp David and Humiliating Surrender"]

[Text] All of a sudden the rulers of Egypt—and the rulers of the Arabs—are hastening to establish economic relations and joint venture projects with Israel, all under the aegis of "normalization" and peace, preparatory to the abandonment of the Council of the Arab League's resolution to continue applying the boycott "at all its levels."

In Cairo, the "heroes" of Camp David are acting shamelessly and with no effort to disguise what they are doing to us and to the Arab nation.

Last October (1993), our master cancelled the security restrictions that had been imposed on Egyptians traveling to Israel, including the requirement for them to obtain prior permission to travel, as from the first of November.

Then an agreement was signed by the governments of Egypt, Israel, and Turkey for the establishment of a three-country tourism organization.

After visiting Egypt and meeting with the president and the minister of petroleum, Israeli energy minister, Moshe Shahal, announced the Egyptian Government's agreement, in principle, to supply Israel with nearly 250 million cubic feet of natural gas per day, for 25 years, beginning in 1998.

In President Husni Mubarak's meeting with writers and intellectuals at the book fair, he announced his agreement to sell natural gas to Israel in pipelines passing through the northern Sinai, and to a petroleum refining plant project worth \$85 million, in which Israel would participate, and which would be supplied with Arab (Gulf and Saudi) oil.

In the Peoples Assembly, Dr. Yusuf Wali defended the Israeli role in Egyptian agriculture.

The "Camp David party" marketed this exuberance for, and surrender to Israel, with the slogan of turning the "cold peace" that has existed since the Camp David accords and peace treaty between al-Sadat and Begin (1979), into a "warm peace" in light of Arab and global developments, and the Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles (the "Gaza-Jericho first" agreement).

It did not stop there. In accordance with President Mubarak's "directives," frantic steps have been taken to establish this "warm peace."

In the last week of February, talks were held in Cairo between Egyptian and Israeli delegations of oil experts to study the subject of supplying Israel with natural gas, and to make use of Egyptian drilling companies in the Israeli oil business. The talks dealt with the practical steps for extending gas pipelines from Port Sa'id to Israel, and funding for the project, which is expected to cost nearly \$300 million. Funding will come from a new company established by the Ministry of Petroleum, in which the Petroleum Gases Corp. and the Italian firm Agip will have shares.

The new Minister of Reconstruction [Minister of State for New Urban Communities] Muhammad Ibrahim Sulayman has announced to the Housing and Reconstruction Committee in the Peoples Assembly, a government strategy for developing the Sinai by using Israeli investments.

The Egyptian mufti's office has been the scene of a debate on psychology, to which the Egyptian Psychology Society, headed by Dr. Jamal Madi Abu-al-'Azayim [name as transliterated], was invited, and in which a 15-member Israeli delegation took part.

In Casablanca, President of the Israeli Knesset Rafa'el Edri announced the establishment of a mixed Israeli-Egyptian-Moroccan company to set up an air link between Morocco and Israel through Egypt, to facilitate the travel of Israeli Jews of Moroccan origin "who wish to visit their country, Morocco."

Once again there is talk—insolently, this time—of al-Sadat's project to dig a canal through the Sinai to bring Nile water to Israel.

Western sources link the Nile canal project with the plan to dig a 280-km-long canal from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea—with the goal of raising the standard of the Dead Sea waters and generating electrical energy by harnessing the movement of the water between the two seas—and a third project for digging a canal from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. These sources say that the Italian Government has announced its readiness to fund the feasibility study for the Red Sea-Dead Sea Canal project after Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and the Palestinian authority gave their consent, and the construction of a huge port between the port of 'Aqabah and the Eilat on the route of the new canal.

According to the Israeli study, the cost of digging the three proposed canals will range from \$750 million to \$1.5 billion for each canal. The project also includes the installation of water treatment stations whose cost is estimated at near \$1 billion, which would produce nearly 1 billion cubic meters of potable water annually.

As these sources say: "The project is one of a group of projects studied by the World Bank, aimed at securing economic assimilation and interconnection in the

Middle East." The World Bank, in cooperation with the United States and Germany, will take part in funding the research and feasibility studies.

And the frantic Egyptian rush toward normalization—or more accurately into the trap of linkage, assimilation, and interconnection with Israel and the Middle Eastern market—has been accompanied by a parallel Arab rush.

Qatar announced, through its Foreign Minister Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabbur Al Thani, that its government was holding preliminary talks with Israel on a huge project for exporting gas to Israel and to Europe through Israel. The project cost is estimated at nearly \$2 billion.

Casablanca has received an Israeli delegation led by deputy Rafa'el Edri, president of the Israeli Knesset, to take part in the International Assembly of Jews of Moroccan Origin. This was a new step in the growing economic, commercial, and political relations between Morocco and Israel, especially in the areas of agriculture, transport, and tourism. Moroccan businessmen and government officials have made several visits to Israel recently.

Jordanian and Tunisian delegations have visited Israel to discuss opportunities for future cooperation.

Political circles expect the Arab League Council to study an American request this month that it lift the Arab boycott of Israel at the third level, which bans international companies from doing business with Israel. The U.S. secretary of commerce made this request on his visit to Cairo on 21 January. After his visit to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel, Ronald Brown announced that "Arab countries will soon announce an end to the boycott of Israel."

The fact that the secretary general of the Arab League put this on the agenda of the League Council for its 101st session (March 1994) drew mixed reactions, especially as the League Council had made a resolution last 22 November to maintain the Arab boycott of Israel at all levels.

This sad story concluded with Shim'on Peres' announcement, during the press conference he and 'Arafat held in Davos, Switzerland, about holding a conference in Amman, Jordan, to study the economic future of the Middle East. The Israeli media pointed out that this conference was being planned by "the global economic community" and the U.S. Council of Foreign Relations. Dennis Ross and Richard Murphy are to play major roles in it, and no less than 4,000 officials, managers, and CEOs will take part, representing the global economic elite. A number of heads of state may attend, among them Clinton, Mitterrand, Major, Kohl, and Hosokawa, as it is seen as a global summit conference on development in the Middle East.

These events, which are occurring under the aegis of normalization, of the Middle Eastern market, or the development of the Middle East, or peace, are all aimed

at securing Israel's future in light of the American-Israeli peace imposed on this region, which is certainly not the just and comprehensive peace we speak of.

What is now occurring is clearly aimed at establishing a formula for regional cooperation at the political, cultural, and economic levels, not merely to achieve total Arab and Palestinian recognition of the legitimacy of the Israeli state—founded upon the usurpation of part of the land of Palestine in 1948—within secure and recognized borders. It offers Israel the elements of a life of plenty, on Arab resources, and imposes the establishment of a neo-colonialist Middle Eastern system that protects the imperialist interests of the United States and its allies. It safeguards Israel, for its part, as the pillar of these interests, and takes the place of the regional Arab system and the institutions of joint Arab action. It negates the idea of Arab nationalism and its slogans of unity, and the national Arab liberation movement.

For peace threatens the Israeli economy with collapse, unless it is saved by this new role planned for it through normalization and the Middle Eastern market.

Thus the real exchange Israel is proposing is not land for peace, but the part in exchange for the whole; the occupied lands in exchange for the exploitation of Arab lands and resources through normalization and the Middle Eastern market.

Will the party of Camp David stop seeing its surrender to the Zionists and the Americans as realistic and courageous and clear, as "traversing the rocky roads to peace"?

Will Egyptian and Arab nationalist forces call things by their names, and reject this shameful surrender? Will we bravely confront the catastrophe that is about to envelop us and our nation, that implants Israel as a leading imperialist state in the Arab region, in the name of normalization and the Middle Eastern market?

This is the question, which the Egyptian and Arab left, and all nationalist forces, must answer—and with deeds, not words.

Impact of GATT on Economic Liberalization Viewed

94LD0033A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
18 Mar 94 p 8

[Interview with Ashraf Shams-al-Din, chairman of sub-committee on trade in services, by Najla' Dhikri; place and date not given: "Liberalization of International Trade in Services Will Realize Export Surge for Egypt"—first four paragraphs are AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI introduction]

[Text] Liberalizing international trade in services will bring Egypt the as-yet-undeveloped export surge that Egypt has long sought to realize through goods exports.

This is especially so because Egypt preceded most developing countries, all the Eastern European socialist countries, and China in following an economic open-door policy that led to a relative development of the services sector.

A report of the national committee monitoring the Uruguay Round and the permanent committee on trade in services affirms this. The subcommittee on trade in services will begin meeting next week to arrive at a final report before the agreement is signed this April.

Although many advanced and developing countries fear the consequences of the agreement to liberalize trade in services under the Uruguay agreement that is to go into effect in July 1995, experts in Egypt state that Egypt's service sectors—especially finance, tourism, construction, and building—are ready to deal with the world through import and export.

Ashraf Shams-al-Din chairs a subcommittee of the permanent committee on the international agreement to liberalize trade in goods and services. He also heads the foreign markets and international cooperation section of the Financial Market Authority. He stated that Egypt's commitment to an economic reform program has effectively speeded the growth of the service sectors, so that they can compete on the international level. He indicated that these sectors would be ready to operate under the GATT agreement in only three years, although the agreement allows developing countries a period of ten years to develop their sectors to be consistent with GATT.

Relative Advantages

[Dhikri] In light of reports that other countries at the Uruguay Round of the international trade agreement failed to be convinced to remove their barriers to foreign financial services, how can Egypt benefit from joining the GATT agreement as regards trade in services?

[Shams-al-Din] In many service activities Egypt enjoys relative advantages that increase its competitiveness in particular areas. The service sector has contributed greatly and increasingly to national income and to improving the balance of payments situation, particularly through the remittances of overseas workers, tourism, and the Suez Canal. At the beginning of the nineties, the service sector contributed nearly 76 percent to the balance of payments. Compare this to the situation at the beginning of the seventies, when it contributed only 13 percent. Thus, liberalizing international trade in services will realize a great export surge for Egypt. The service sectors rely basically on human capital and skilled workers in many areas. The agreement allows the service sector wider movement and a precise structure for exporting to foreign markets outside the Arab and African regions. This is of concern to us, according to a report of the permanent committee on trade in services, in such areas as professional services, work force, and building and construction—especially

with regard to workers organized as groups or in exercising the right to establish service projects that rely on skilled workers.

Opportunities for Egyptian Workers

As for the immediate advantages for Egypt, the liberalization commitments that the agreement's member nations have made will provide opportunities for Egyptian exports of services, especially in sectors that have reached a high stage of competitiveness, such as banking services and insurance. Egyptian professionals will be given an opportunity to work in the advanced countries. The construction sector will be able to carry on activity in the agreement's Arab member countries—Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria—as well as in the African countries. In addition, the services agreement allows Egypt through its definite commitments to obtain modern technology, to access communications channels and centers of information about service activities and trade in various countries, and to benefit from other countries' laws in regulating and encouraging its service sectors.

[Dhikri] Are there to be further negotiations about workers?

[Shams-al-Din] Regarding the Egyptian work force (the individuals necessary to provide services), in addition to the commitments that have been made in this area, negotiations will be held starting in May 1994 to make the advanced countries' markets more open to organized, rather than individual, workers.

Special Privileges

[Dhikri] Egypt played a prominent role in the grouping of developing countries during the negotiations. What was the role of the Egyptian negotiator? Did the developing countries succeed in obtaining any advantages? Did any disagreement occur about liberalizing trade in services?

[Shams-al-Din] There was no disagreement over the principle of liberalizing trade in services, but there was disagreement on definitions. A permanent committee on the agreement has been formed in Egypt. It has seven subcommittees, including one on trade in services. The role of each committee is to participate with the Egyptian negotiator, so that the negotiating takes place on objective principles that convince the nations of the world that we are part of an international fabric whose goal is to benefit from liberalizing trade in goods and services—but also bears in mind the economic and social circumstances that we must take into account while implementing our liberalization program.

Egypt is part of the developing world. It stated its position from the beginning and played a prominent role in the grouping of developing countries. It acted as a spokesman for Africa and the Arab countries that have joined the agreement. Egypt also spoke in the same way as India and Latin America. Egypt was encouraged to play this role by its experience in its announced program

of economic reform, which has won the esteem of advanced and developing countries alike. Our position was based on sound economic principles. Egypt officially entered the Uruguay Round in 1986 and announced that it was a party to the agreement. It participated in the 1990 multilateral negotiations. As for the developing countries, through their united stand in the negotiations they obtained special treatment in view of their weak competitiveness in most service sectors. The agreement on services included provisions that give the developing nations flexibility. Most importantly, they were granted a longer time to establish national information publishing centers to comply with the principle of full disclosure of local laws and regulations governing the service sectors under negotiation. Also, it was made easier for these countries to enter into economic integration agreements among themselves to develop trade in services or between themselves and the advanced countries, provided that the subjects of these countries are exempted from work and residence permits.

Safeguards include measures to enable a temporary disengagement from particular commitments in case of a balance of payments deficit or if the member country needs to take certain steps to preserve its hard currency reserve. These provisions allow one to request that certain commitments be amended or withdrawn a year after the agreement begins to be implemented, without being bound by the ordinarily specified three-year period. In addition, the developing countries, including Egypt, are given sufficient flexibility to subsidize their production or exports in the services trade. At the same time, the advanced countries are forbidden to use subsidies as a means to increase their exports to the developing countries. A developing country may retain a monopoly right to import certain of its services during the time this agreement is in effect, provided that the monopoly does not carry on its activity in a way that does not accord with the provisions of the agreement. There are many additional provisions that give the developing countries, including Egypt, greater flexibility.

Legislative Changes

[Dhikri] What are Egypt's commitments under this agreement? Does its application require legislative or administrative changes? Within what time period can we accomplish what is required on the international level?

[Shams-al-Din] Egypt's general commitments accord with the general commitments in the agreement. Most importantly, Egypt commits itself to the most-favored-nation principle, under which any member country of the agreement will enjoy any privileges granted to any other member country. It also commits itself to the principle of full disclosure—meaning that rules governing trade in services are to be published, announced, and disclosed to others. There are particular commitments in certain sectors. Egypt has announced its desire to enter into the international services trade in economic sectors that have already been liberalized in the economic reform program. Lists of commitments

have been prepared in accordance with the regulations, laws, and rules that govern these activities, especially in the finance sector, tourism, and building and construction. The Egyptian delegation at the negotiations demanded that other countries in turn promise to open their markets to Egyptian service exports, especially the organized and professional work force. The definite commitments that Egypt made will allow foreign investments in Egypt to set up companies in accordance with Egyptian legislation in the sectors of banking, insurance, reinsurance, capital market services, tourism services, marine transport services, construction services, and engineering consulting services. Commitments in one of these sectors were made before the agreement; negotiations took place and an agreement was reached. The remaining sectors must prepare themselves philosophically in the framework of this agreement. They must work out development programs with the assistance of research centers and must engage in the necessary training—especially in the transportation and communication sector, the education sector, and the social insurance sector. We have worked as a committee to encourage more sectors to study the situation and to lay down a plan to mobilize the country's economic and technical forces. In this way the country will be able to announce its full position on the general framework of the agreement to be signed this April.

As for the changes required, some pieces of legislation do indeed need to be changed—not to be in step with the agreement, but to serve the national economy. The nationalization laws have still not been fully repealed. We have begun the process of legislative change with the unified tax and the unified labor law. Change begins with general law and proceeds to specific law, specific regulation, and finally internal regulations—all for a single purpose more important than any other purpose, namely economic reform.

Minister Addresses Population Planning Issues

94LD0031A Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic
16 Mar 94 pp 14, 44

[Interview with Dr. Mahir Mahran, population and family affairs minister, by Suhayr al-Husayni; place and date not given—first five paragraphs are AKHIR SA'AH introduction]

[Text] What comes next now that the population clock has sprung on us the surprise that Egypt's population has reached 60.283 million people, compared to 58 million last year? What about the population minister's statements that we have been able to control the population explosion and that there is evident response from citizens to family planning? Will our media continue to confront this population catastrophe with television and newspaper advertisements? Can this dangerous figure motivate the government to adopt firm decisions to deal with this problem that has become a matter of life or death for Egypt's future development? When will family planning become a national issue, and when will all factions be called upon to contribute to solving it?

Numerous questions and inquiries that abound with anxiety and that are reiterated on the Egyptian scene gathered in my mind while I was on my way to interview Dr. Mahir Mahran, the population and family affairs minister, who said promptly, "The declared figure is incorrect and it doesn't reflect the true number of Egypt's population. There is an actual response to family planning and the number of women using contraceptives has amounted to 50 percent." The minister added, "We cannot do more than this or issue firm decisions similar to those issued by China because of our social circumstances. Therefore, we rely on persuasion and leave the choice up to the citizens."

It was natural for me to begin the dialogue with Dr. Mahir Mahran, the population and family affairs minister, by asking him for an explanation on the report circulated by all the media, saying that the population of the Arab Republic of Egypt has amounted to 60.283 million people, compared to 58 million last year.

Explaining, Dr. Mahir Mahran responded, "This figure is incorrect because it doesn't reflect the true number of the population of the Arab Republic of Egypt. When we speak of Egypt's population, we shouldn't include citizens who reside in Libya and Kuwait and emigrants to Canada and Australia because we aren't responsible for educating, feeding, or treating them. So, the actual number of Egypt's population is 57.673 million people. This is the number with which government officials deal when they consider the provision of housing, food, schools, and hospitals. This certainly isn't in conflict with our moral responsibility for expatriate Egyptians."

The population affairs minister added, "The danger of the population problem lies in the fact that there is disparity between population growth and available resources. Expatriate Egyptians aren't included in these calculations."

We Have Exceeded Targeted Figure

[al-Husayni] Far from the census figures and from how correct they are, you have announced that the population explosion process has been brought under control and that the citizens have responded to family planning. If this has actually happened, then why haven't its effects shown clearly in the population surveys?

[Mahran] What I have announced is completely true. The proof is that the normal population growth rate was 30 per 1,000 or 3 percent. This rate dropped to 22 per 1,000 or 2.2 percent in 1992. Moreover, we have recently received indications confirming that normal population growth has dropped to less than 20 per 1,000 or 2 percent. This is undoubtedly great, especially if we consider the recommendations of the national population conference that was attended by President Husni Mubarak in 1984. If we review those resolutions, we find that they hoped that contraceptive use among women would amount to 36 percent by 1991 and to 43 percent by 1996. But what has happened, and this is confirmed by statistics, is that contraception use among women of

child-bearing age amounted to 47.6 percent, or close to 48 percent, in 1990. This means that in 1990, we were able to surpass the figure targeted for 1996. This percentage is significant because it undoubtedly reflects on the number of births. Consequently, statistics indicate that from 1991 to 1992, the number of births dropped by 100,000.

[al-Husayni] Mr. minister, this 100,000 figure is very small and it doesn't signify the evident response about which you have talked.

[Mahran] When dealing with this issue, we must take into account that Egypt's illiteracy rate amounts to 46 percent now, as shown by the population plan prepared under the supervision of 80 experts and professors representing the ministries concerned, universities, research centers, and private organizations. Despite this high illiteracy rate, we find that there is response among women of child-bearing age to the use of contraceptives, especially in Upper Egypt. The proof of this is that the population and health survey, conducted every four years, has confirmed that in some governorates, especially in Upper Egypt, contraceptive use among women increased by 100 percent from 1988 to 1992.

[al-Husayni] But statistics also confirm that Egypt's population has been increasing by 1.2 million annually for several years. So, why doesn't the effect of increased contraceptive use show in population figures?

[Mahran] Population growth is a must. It exists and it will continue to exist for the next 20-25 years because Egypt has now a broad segment, amounting to nearly 45 percent the population, aged below 20. This segment will have its turn to marry and to think of family and of producing children. This is normal and expected.

Continued Increase

[al-Husayni] This is a foregone conclusion. But in light of the efforts you have talked about, it is possible to reduce the increase to just 1 million instead of 1.2 million?

[Mahran] This is actually what has been happening. Population growth rose to 1.4 million annually and then dropped to 1.2 million. We should note that even though Egypt's population is growing steadily, we have maintained this rate [of 1.2 million] for several years. This is a good sign. If the response I am talking about wasn't there, this [1.2 million] figure would have increased year after year.

Television Advertisements Aren't Enough

[al-Husayni] Mr. Minister, many believe that at a national population center and then at the population affairs ministry, you have relied fundamentally for family planning on television and newspaper advertising. You spend on this advertising millions of pounds

that you get either from foreign organizations or from the state budget. But this isn't enough to confront Egypt's population growth problem now that it has become so serious.

[Mahran] To begin, the phase of strong emphasis on the media has been essential for enlightenment. If you are talking about the futility of television advertising campaigns for the educated, then this is true. But the educated account for no more than 20 percent of the Egyptian people and most of them do their own family planning without the need for any other party. But the rest of the Egyptian people, especially the Egyptian rural population and those who live in poor quarters and who constitute the overwhelming majority of Egypt's population—they are greatly influenced by television and it has produced obvious results among them. For example, television has disseminated information beneficial to the service recipients, whether the information is about finding the places where the service is rendered or about various types of contraception and about how to get them. This has led to an increased number of women who frequent family planning clinics. Therefore, the means of television advertising is, within the bounds of our resources and circumstances, an effective means, especially since we are talking about a country where the illiteracy rate amounts to 46 percent.

China's Experiment

[al-Husayni] Other countries, such as China, have employed swift means to solve this problem by issuing firm requirements that citizens observe and apply or else be exposed to negative incentives. Consequently, these countries have been actually able to deal with this problem within a few years.

[Mahran] The Egyptian citizen will not accept the means used by China, especially since China has employed just two specific means, namely compulsory abortion and sterilization. These means are prohibited by law, except in a few cases, such as when the mother's health is in danger. Moreover, China has determined that urban families will have one child and rural families two. If a citizen fails to observe this limitation, he is subjected to negative incentives. But we cannot employ this method in Egypt. The citizen will reject it and some clergymen will object to it. Moreover, Egypt's leaders believe that it isn't appropriate to force citizens to implement something through pressure and punishment, especially under the difficult economic circumstances that Egypt is experiencing currently and that cause hardship to many citizens.

[al-Husayni] Mr. Minister, the direct cause of the economic and social crisis experienced currently by Egypt is the fearful annual population growth. If the problem of population inflation isn't dealt with, pressures and hardship will increase year after year.

[Mahran] This is true. But even if the government agrees to establish family planning controls and to compel

citizens to apply them, we will be surprised by a revolution by clergymen, perhaps even before citizens object. We will begin hearing phrases such as, "each infant comes with his livelihood" and "you are interfering in God's will." Therefore, the means we have used so far is the means of persuading people of voluntary family planning with gentle words and without the use of coercion or pressure.

[al-Husayni] Will you continue to use gentle and voluntary means even if they fail to produce the desired results, thus making the population problem more serious and complex?

[Mahran] We are proceeding along the right path, but not with the required speed. This saddles the government with some economic burdens. However, the government accepts this burden so the citizens will not experience more pressures. We don't wish to speak pessimistically about this issue, especially since there is response to family planning, even though it isn't as quick as one desires. But it suffices that we have gotten to the point where one of every two women uses contraceptives.

National Issue

[al-Husayni] Mr. Minister, many demand that we establish the population growth issue as a national issue to which all factions contribute their ideas and efforts, especially since this issue has become a matter of life or death to Egypt's future development.

[Mahran] Everybody will participate and cooperate with us when he is convinced of the need for family planning. This is what we are trying to accomplish now as a first step.

[al-Husayni] To deal with this problem, we can make our national issue for the coming phase the issue of applying the law that prohibits truancy at the basic education level and that calls for punishing truant children. I believe that applying this law is enough to deal with a major part of the problem.

[Mahran] How?

[al-Husayni] Most urban families are content with one or two children because to these families, a child is a financial burden when it comes to schooling, food, and clothing. But most families who produce a large number of children view a child as a source of income, considering that such a child leaves school, goes into the labor market, and starts earning a monthly income of 100 pounds or more while still in his tender years. This is why a child is a source of wealth for such families and why they cannot respond to or be persuaded by the principle of family planning, which will deprive them of this income. This is the class of people who produce 10 or more children and who create the population crisis we are all experiencing now. Therefore, if the law prohibiting school truancy is applied, if a fine is levied on a truant child, and if the family begins to shoulder the

expenses of feeding, clothing, and educating the child, it will think a thousand times before it produces this immense number of children.

[Mahran] We have no objection to adopting any measure as long as it is in society's interest. But this must be done in light of conclusions reached by studies on this issue.

However, we are currently conducting field studies in cooperation with Egyptian research centers. We await the outcome of these studies on the rural family's size, on labor among children, and on school truancy numbers. We can then make the right decision on this issue in light of the conclusions made by these studies.

Lowered Service Standard

[al-Husayni] So, in addition to advertising in the various media, what is the ministry's plan to tackle this problem in the coming phase, especially since one of the important reasons for creating this ministry is to confront Egypt's population growth problem?

[Mahran] To start, barely three months have passed since the ministry was created. Moreover, we are dealing with all elements of the population issue, not just with family planning. There is no doubt that family planning is an important element on which we focus in our effort to solve the population growth problem. But the population problem has three main dimensions:

- The first dimension is increased population growth. We try to curtail this problem through family planning activities designed to curb the rush to produce children.
- The second dimension is the poor distribution of Egypt's population. For example, 99 percent of the population lives on a narrow strip along the Nile. If we redistribute the population, we will eliminate numerous problems. We will reduce population density, haphazard housing, terrorism, and crimes. We have actually begun to work to achieve this end. If we look at Egypt's map, we will find that efforts have been made by the government to redistribute the population. For example, numerous new towns and villages have been built in the Red Sea Governorate and citizens have begun to move there, inhabit, and develop them. Moreover, a number of villages have appeared along the northern coastal highway all the way to Marsa Matruh Governorate. This is in addition to new towns in Upper Egypt where we find, for example, al-Minya and al-Minya al-Jadidah [New al-Minya], Asyut and Asyut al-Jadidah, plus the towns created in recent years, such as al-'Ubur, al-Sadat, 10 Ramadan, 6 October, and other towns. All these towns have been built to redistribute the population. But to accomplish this goal, greater awareness is needed among the population so people will move and reside in these new towns, especially if work opportunities and housing and residential resources are secured for them.
- The third dimension is the so-called low standard of services. Here, it is required to enhance the standard

of services provided to the population. What I mean is that in the area of education, the number of the educated should be increased. In the area of health, mortality rates among infants and pregnant mothers should be reduced. For example, the mortality rate among pregnant women is 174 per 100,000. This is a very high rate when compared with the advanced countries, where the mortality rate among pregnant women is 5-11 per 100,000 pregnancies. The more we enhance the population characteristics, the greater population awareness grows. Thus, we can develop the idea of what the appropriate family size is, making this size compatible with the family's material and social capabilities, which is what is happening in the West.

The family planning services plan of the Ministry of Population and Family Affairs focuses on spreading health services to villages, especially since one-half Egypt's villages, totaling 4,200 in number, are deprived of family planning services. The plan also focuses on greater use of the media in all its forms; on manufacturing contraceptives locally under all circumstances, regardless of the nature of our relations with the countries from which we acquire these contraceptives; and on providing the service permanently. The plan calls, moreover, for securing a rural female advisor for every 5,000 families. Currently, one advisor is allocated for every 30,000 families. Consequently, she cannot perform her duties at all. The plans also calls that greater attention be given to the issue by local governments and that family planning committees be formed that are headed by village chiefs. This is what we have actually begun to do in a number of villages, especially since a village chief has strong relations with his village inhabitants ordinarily and since he can influence and persuade them. The plan further calls for increasing the number of mobile medical units, especially since there are villages that are so remote from family planning centers and units that the clinics and units cannot provide the required services to the inhabitants of these villages.

Using Small Industry as Employment Strategy

94LD0033B Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
18 Mar 94 p 8

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Aql: "In Order To Absorb Unemployment"]

[Text] The Alexandria Businessmen's Association's experiment of espousing a small industries policy as a means to absorb unemployment and help develop the Egyptian economy has proved a great success, now that the problems of funding this large project have been overcome. Grants by the American AID [Agency for International Development] organization have also helped. Such projects have proved to be successful in all parts of the world when supervised by community institutions such as businessmen's associations. As we have said before, the Alexandria Businessmen's Association's project has made it possible to provide 20,000 jobs.

The association's sense of the dimensions of the unemployment problem is leading it to make an effort to carry such a project to all the governorates of Egypt.

Furthermore, AID has decided to implement five similar projects in five governorates. The Alexandria Businessmen's Association has volunteered to make every effort to provide the necessary training and bring its experience to the governorates in which the new projects will be implemented. Training has already begun.

Transferring this expertise is necessary for all the associations that are going to take charge of these projects—especially for the leaders and cadres working in such a project.

Transferring the systems followed in accounts, information extraction, monitoring by highly developed computer programs, and training on the record-keeping cycle of all operations, as well as management systems, incentive systems, legal systems and compensations for workers, surely will save much time and effort. It will enable the new projects to achieve positive results in the shortest possible time. This will make us very happy in Alexandria because of our sense of having given something to the country.

Perhaps private, nongovernmental associations will begin to implement such a project in all governorates of Egypt. We know that AID has a great desire to establish and fund such important projects as soon as an organized group of businessmen exists eager to serve its country and ready to shoulder this responsibility in one of the governorates.

The Alexandria Businessmen's Association currently manages a project funded at 39 million pounds by the Social Fund in cooperation with Bank Misr. The project's goal is to establish new enterprises for graduates of universities and technical institutes and schools.

Many young people frequently ask about the terms for obtaining these loans.

The terms, briefly stated, involve presenting a good study that explains how the enterprise can succeed and the existence of a place where it can be implemented.

The association has already begun implementing the project. Four months ago, some 3,000 young people submitted studies in which they applied for loans to begin new businesses. About 2,500 applications were rejected due to lack of places for the young people to set up their desired enterprises. The rest of the applications are proceeding well. The association, in cooperation with Bank Misr, is allocating about 1 million pounds a month in loans to young people who fulfill the terms in many areas of industry, agriculture, livestock fattening, and services.

Those responsible for the project at the Alexandria Businessmen's Association are determining by experience the problems that small industries confront in

development. The association has a number of observations about these problems. The most important of them are:

1. We all know that the bulk of the unemployed are concentrated in old cities and zones of haphazard development. Because these small industries depend for their marketing on members of the community, they cannot survive if they are moved outside the community.

Decisions now being implemented aim at moving all industries away from the cities in order to improve environmental conditions. This is being done at a time when alternative locations have not been prepared near the communities, so that the industries can expand in them without restrictions. These decisions prevent any small enterprise from making any change in the place it uses or rearranging it so that it can expand. Thus, they aim at combatting expansion, while Egypt's welfare demands that these enterprises develop and expand.

Also, these decisions provide a golden opportunity for the bureaucrats charged with overseeing them to control these industries and thus create an unstable condition for them.

We all know that on New York's Seventh Avenue there are tall buildings completely filled with small factories that produce everything imaginable. We see the same story in Hong Kong and Taiwan. In many countries there are hundreds of large buildings containing factories of all specialties located inside the cities and on all streets.

We must also remember that the electric motors that run these industries have developed so that they no longer produce any noise. The laws allow the installation of air conditioners everywhere. They are run by electric motors whose horsepower often is much greater than what some handicraft industries use.

Certainly, the unemployment problem is so serious that it must take priority over the environment problem, especially in the conditions that the country is currently experiencing.

Implementing such decisions in the old cities not only hinders the development of small industries, it prevents the possible establishment of new industries. Studies estimate that at least 50,000 new enterprises could start every year in these communities. Currently they cannot be established, and their [potential] owners become not only a force that is unemployed but one that is destructive to society.

We hope that all the decisions will be changed so that they promote the expansion of small industries or the establishment of new enterprises in the old cities, as long as they do not emit noise, gases, fumes, or odors that harm the environment. Other than this, it is not right to place any restrictions.

The pioneering productive families project that the Ministry of Social Affairs is sponsoring under the leadership of its minister, Dr. Amal 'Uthman, depends on employing these families in productive activities inside the residence where they live, thereby transforming the families into a self-supporting productive force that can contribute to economic development. It is not right for decisions to be implemented that go counter to this national strategy.

2. Encouraging the establishment of light, labor-intensive, nonpolluting industries is one of the most important ways of dealing with the unemployment problem in Egypt. We all know that high wages for workers in the advanced countries are causing such industries to be closed in those countries and move to countries that enjoy cheap labor. Egypt can benefit greatly from putting millions of workers to work in these industries. The most important of them are the ready-made clothing industry, handmade carpets, electronics, and assembling industries. Any ready-made clothing or electronics factory can easily absorb a thousand workers.

These industries do not lend themselves to establishment in new communities because the operation of transporting thousands of workers daily from the old cities where there is an accumulated work force to the new cities is a very costly operation that tires the workers and affects their productivity. Such enterprises must be established in old cities, villages, and zones of haphazard development, so as to turn unemployed workers in those areas into a healthy, productive force. Unfortunately, this principle conflicts with the decisions now being implemented. Such industries therefore are not spreading or expanding to absorb thousands of workers because the operation of transporting workers every day increases the industry's cost and reduces the workers' productivity. Furthermore, these industries need to enjoy the same years of tax exemption set in the new communities. We hope this problem will be studied seriously. We ask officials to visit the clothing factory in al-Badrashayn. It employs 3,000 workers, and all of its production is earmarked for export to the United States. It is an example of what we are talking about.

3. When it issued the recent unified tax law, the government paid attention to giving a five-year tax exemption to new enterprises funded by the Social Fund.

In the People's Assembly committee that held hearings on the aforementioned law, the Alexandria Businessmen's Association proposed that the same exemption be applied to the loans that any registered nonprofit association grants to combat unemployment, just as is done with the Social Fund. We hope that this view will be followed in the future.

These are some observations that will help with formulating the necessary plans to deal with the problem of unemployment.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Tribal Leader al-Suraymah Interviewed

94AE0100A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
28 Mar 94 p 5

[Telephone interview with Shaykh Ahmad Bin-Farid al-Suraymah, leader of Shabwah Tribal Grouping in 'Ataq, by 'Abdallah Hammudah in London; date not given: "Ahmad Bin-Farid Supports Local Authorities, Yemeni Unity; Accuses Governor, Police Chief of Using Their Positions To Entrench Partisanship"—first four paragraphs are AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT introduction]

[Text] Now that Yemen's map of political forces has changed after unification and the adoption of a multi-party system, certain Yemeni figures have returned after years outside their country, to participate in building the new state, starting from the positions they left when they departed during the years following South Yemen's independence on 30 November 1967.

Among the major post-unification returnees who has recently played an important role is Shaykh Ahmad Bin-Farid al-Suraymah, leader of the Tribal Grouping, which currently backs the Socialist Party in Shabwah governorate. Considered one of the most powerful figures there, he was a figure in the episodes of confrontation that took place in the region during the past two weeks.

Against charges of "regionalism" and "traditionalism" that some have leveled against tribal figures in the governorates, Shaykh Bin-Farid declares that he supports the local authorities in their support of the unified state. However, he rejects the use of the organs of that state for narrow partisan purposes. He is placing his resources as a businessman in the Arab and international arena at the service of the people of Shabwah in the context of a new alliance with the Socialist Party that will restore rights to their true holders and release their energies to participate in public work.

Shaykh Bin-Farid spoke for the first time to the Arabic press—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—by telephone between 'Ataq, the capital of Shabwah governorate, and London. The following conversation took place.

[Hammudah] What is the real situation now in Shabwah as you see it?

[Bin-Farid] The situation in Shabwah now is that the great majority of citizens, tribal and nontribal, support the Socialist Party—in other words, the local authority that is an accomplished fact.

Certain episodes have taken place in the area, as you have heard. This was because of provocative elements of the [General] People's Congress. Foremost among them were Ahmad Musa'id Husayn, the former governor of Shabwah in 1972 and also the former minister of state security, and a group from Shalal province who entered

an area on the edges of Shabwah. There were also attempts to smuggle in arms and explosives in Mercedes trucks belonging to Colonel Ahmad 'Ali Muhsin, the Shabwah police commander. But elements from the Tribal Grouping, which backs the local government—the Socialist Party—in Shabwah, confronted them and stopped them.

This flows from our faith and agrees with the Pledge and Accord Document, which provided for the principle of decentralization and established the foundations of local government. We are on the way to implementing it in fact.

In my opinion, as long as the political leaders in Aden and Sanaa have been unable to implement the local government provided by the charter, it is reasonable and practical for us to begin implementing it on the scene. We are not against 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih as a person or the People's Congress as a party; we are for the Charter of Treaty and Agreement. It must be translated into action.

That is why this Tribal Grouping, which includes 90 percent of the people of Shabwah governorate, came into existence.

The situation two months ago was that people in Shabwah were suffering from confusion and vacillation, unable to distinguish between true and false. So we explained these matters to them. They understood them, and we gained control. Conditions stabilized completely, except when elements intent on sabotage occasionally tried to smuggle arms and explosives into Shabwah. I regret to say that they were coming from Sanaa.

Now, however, we have set up tribal check points in Wadi Markhah under the al-Nisiyin tribes, in Wadi Khawrah under the leadership of the Al Dayyan tribes, and in Wadi Hammam under the control of the Hammam tribes. We have also managed almost to cordon off the roads into 'Ataq under the leadership of Shaykh 'Awad Husayn 'Ashim al-Kawkabi. He is certainly the number-two figure in the Tribal Grouping and one of Shabwah's most important shaykhs.

Events in 'Ataq

[Hammudah] What exactly happened in 'Ataq? Did you besiege the headquarters of the governorate and the police administration?

[Bin-Farid] That is correct—when we arrived. The reason was because Governor Dirhim Nu'man and Police Commandant Ahmad 'Ali Muhsin turned these offices, which are official offices that represent the state as a whole, into headquarters for organizing the People's Congress, inciting the people against the Socialist Party, and entrenching the Congress's control.

We said to them: "You represent a state, not the People's Congress or the Socialist Party. The governor represents the authority of the state, and the police director performs the duty of a man in government service." We

insisted that they clear the buildings of the armed elements that were intimidating citizens into joining the People's Congress by force. This is the reason.

[Hammudah] But they say that they are the last symbols of the People's Congress in the southern and eastern governorates and that their expulsion could somehow be considered as putting an end to unity and entrenching secession. How do you reply to this?

[Bin-Farid] We say that the presence of the two ought to represent the united state, not the People's Congress.

[Hammudah] You seem to be working on the assumption that you have no objection to their remaining if they represent the united state, and not a particular party.

[Bin-Farid] Yes, exactly.

[Hammudah] They still have not left the two buildings. Does that mean that they have carried out what you asked them to do?

[Bin-Farid] They appear to have carried it out temporarily, because the joint military committee has arrived. But I suspect that when the committee leaves, they will return to their activities as before.

Persona Non Grata

[Hammudah] What danger did the return of Ahmad Musa'id Husayn represent?

[Bin-Farid] He really is persona non grata. In his personal and tribal capacity he represents no danger at all to the Shabwah area, because he belongs to the Jabwan [as transliterated] tribe, one of the smallest tribes of al-'Awaliq, representing perhaps no more than 3 percent of the total tribespeople of Shabwah.

However, he does represent a danger because he claims to represent the People's Congress and claims that he has been sent officially by them. Indeed, he brought about 20 armed crews with him, armed with such weapons as the Dushka. That is the source of the danger. But when we arrived, his influence and moves shrank to the valley to which he belongs, a small valley no more than 10 square kilometers in area. He has not left it from the time we arrived until the present moment.

[Hammudah] Is he besieged in this area?

[Bin-Farid] He is not besieged, but he is forbidden from all the tribes surrounding him. One can therefore say that he is besieged according to tribal customs—in the sense that the tribes are boycotting him.

[Hammudah] What is the nature of the relationship between you and Colonel 'Awad al-Safidi, commander of the central military axis of the Socialist Party's southern forces? General People's Congress communiqués say that he backed you with armored vehicles and forces in the operation of encircling governorate and police headquarters.

[Bin-Farid] That is absolutely untrue. We did not see him all that week, which indicates that there is no connection between us.

Change of Positions

[Hammudah] Some people, attempting to review the pages of history, say that you were a foe of the Socialist Party in the past, but that now you support it. How would you reply to them?

[Bin-Farid] This is a true charge in its place. I indeed was a foe of the Socialist Party, or what used to be called the National Front, after my house was demolished and I was evicted from it in November 1967. We have continued to disagree with them in opinion and principle throughout the past 25 years. We indeed have fought them. However, the balances have changed, as we now know. We are sure that they have abandoned their old methods and ideas.

[Hammudah] Is that why you think that joint action with them has now become acceptable?

[Bin-Farid] Yes. Yes, because participation and dialogue are necessary in order to implement democracy somehow. I believe they have good intentions. Time will tell. We hope that what we have in mind is correct.

[Hammudah] How do you assess the strength of the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Grouping for Reform in Shabwah governorate?

[Bin-Farid] The fact is that the People's Congress and the Reform Grouping were rejected by many groups from various classes of the people.

The two of them have spent tremendous sums—money, weapons, and vehicles. This is a pity, because general elections were held on 27 April last year and expressed the will of the people of each governorate. The people of Shabwah governorate elected the Socialist Party's candidate from among the other candidates. This is democracy.

The Congress and Reform ought to have stepped in again only when it came time for the next elections. That is when they should have made their contribution. But they have tried to impose their presence by force of arms, which is a mistake.

[Hammudah] People are saying that the People's Congress and the Reform Grouping are trying to develop their own local forces in Shabwah and that at the same time the Socialist Party has turned to you. Is that correct?

[Bin-Farid] It is not correct. We came to Shabwah as ordinary citizens, to visit family and kin, to rebuild our demolished homes, and to begin implementing the building and settlement projects we had promised. We in fact began to repair schools and hospitals. A week ago we began constructing a 35-kilometer road between 'Ataq and al-Musayni'ah at my personal expense. This shows that we love peace. We do not advocate fighting, and we do not carry weapons unless we are forced to do so.

[Hammudah] Since the events of January 1986, Shabwah and Abyan governorates have been a virtual silent opposition to the Socialist Party. The People's Congress is said to have tried to benefit from this in order to detach al-Mahrah and Hadramawt governorates in the east from Aden and Lahij governorates in the west. [sentence as published] Is this correct?

[Bin-Farid] Yes, this is indeed the strategy of the People's Congress. The implementation plan for it included pushing seven brigades from Ma'rib to split Shabwah to the sea by way of Mayfa'ah and Bi'r 'Ali. Thus they would gain control of Shabwah and detach Hadramawt and al-Mahrah, where the oil fields are located. However, when the 30th Brigade reached Shabwah early in January, we also arrived, completely thwarting this strategy. The balance has shifted. However, that is what they might have done.

In my opinion, that strategy has failed, and they no longer have any hope of accomplishing it.

Conditional Support

[Hammudah] To what extent do you think the tribes of Shabwah support the Socialist Party?

[Bin-Farid] The fact, as you know, is that if the Socialist Party proves its good intentions and translates them into deeds—and we have proposed to them that they restore private property to its owners, resume respecting tribal figures, and turn over sensitive positions to the people of Shabwah in managing their affairs, not making the holding of these positions conditional on being Socialist Party members, but giving them to generous, sincere, and honest persons, regardless of their previous political affiliations—I think that if they act in accordance with this view and continue in it, success will be theirs, and the majority will be on their side.

[Hammudah] Does that mean that talk about how the tribes in Shabwah are submissive to the Socialist Party is a mistaken assertion?

[Bin-Farid] Yes.

[Hammudah] Tension has largely returned in recent days. What are the facts about this?

[Bin-Farid] No, it has not returned. Nothing new has happened since the incident that took place in Bayhan.

[Hammudah] What happened there?

[Bin-Farid] About 10 large Mercedes trucks came loaded with food for the military economic installation in 'Ataq. They tried to bring them in by force, without submitting them to inspection by one of the army posts in al-Sulaym district. A group of tribesmen affiliated with the People's Congress, led by 'Ali Bin-Rashid al-Harithi, then attacked. A clash took place. Five members of the army

were killed, and three of the Ba al-Harith. The trucks were seized and brought to 'Ataq. They are now undergoing inspection, because weapons are suspected to be among the sacks of rice and flour.

[Hammudah] Are you in daily contact with the governor and police chief?

[Bin-Farid] Yes, we are in contact—not daily, but every few days. We are not hostile to them personally, but we are hostile to the style they are following.

[Hammudah] Do you think there has been an improvement in their style, so that it has become more acceptable to the people?

[Bin-Farid] As I said previously, while the military committee is present, the two of them are implementing certain demands about not gathering together certain elements that support them in the People's Congress. However, I fear they may return to the old way of doing things after the committee leaves—and if they go back, we will too!

INDIA

Russia To Help in Weapons Modernization

94AS0255G Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 8 Mar 94 p 13

[Text] Moscow, March 7 (UNI). Russia will help India modernise T-72 tanks and other Soviet-designed weapons, according to commander-in-chief of the Russian land forces Col.-Gen. Vladimir Semyonov, reports ITAR-TASS.

He announced this after the final round of talks with Indian army chief Gen. B.C. Joshi yesterday. Gen. Joshi left for home this morning after a nine-week official visit to the country.

The Russian general also did not rule out leasing some types of weapons for two or three years to India, he however, did not elaborate.

Observers recall that India had taken a nuclear powered, submarine from Russia on lease in the eighties.

While talking to ITAR-TASS, Gen. Joshi expressed India's willingness to continue military-technical cooperation with Russia and said 70 percent of arms with the Indian army were Soviet-designed. He also talked of India's problems in getting the spares.

According to the Russian media, Gen. Joshi had shown interest in purchasing the latest T-72 C tanks, self-propelled artillery guns and military aircraft. However, the Indian embassy here denied the report saying such negotiations are conducted at a much lower bureaucratic level.

Moscow Paper Announces Planned Rao Visit

94AS0255K Madras THE HINDU in English
5 Mar 94 p 1

[Text] Moscow, March 4. The Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, will pay an official visit to Russia later this year, the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Alexander Panov, said today.

In an interview to the Moscow daily SEVODNYA, Mr. Panov, who assumed charge following a major shake-up in the Foreign Ministry, said 1994 would be "a year of Asia for the Russian Foreign Ministry." - UNI

Papers Report Polish Delegation's Visit**Banquet Speeches 3 Mar**

94AS0257A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 4 Mar 94 p 13

[Text] New Delhi, March 3 (PTI). India and Poland today pledged to take innovative measures to promote joint ventures, trade and economic cooperation which had fallen to a rate not in keeping with their potential and interests.

Speaking at a banquet in honour of the Polish President, Mr. Lech Walesa, the President, Dr. S.D. Sharma, said the changes that had taken place in both the countries called for fresh approaches to enhance economic and industrial cooperation.

Dr. Sharma said the dramatic developments that occurred in Poland over the last decade had been an important catalyst in ending the cold war and fundamentally transforming international relations.

Mr. Walesa, in his reply, praised India's efforts to stop the arms race and eliminate the threat of a nuclear war.

India, often together with Poland, had always been in those places where conflicts had to be settled, he said citing the Indo-China commissions and more recently in peace-keeping operations in West Asia and Cambodia.

Turning to the economic front, Mr. Walesa said he believed that there were right conditions to expand bilateral economic co-operations and promote joint ventures.

Dr. Sharma noted that the courageous resistance of the Polish people evoked admiration in India when the dark forces had engulfed Poland.

The dramatic developments that occurred in Poland and the Polish society over the last decade have been an important catalyst in changing not only the face of Europe but in ending the cold war and thus, fundamentally transforming international relations, he added.

Mr. Walesa said Poland always attached a great deal of importance to its contacts and cooperation with India and also a particular respect for its foreign policy.

"India has continuously made efforts to bridge the gaps separating the world," he said.

Mr. Walesa said his country is involved in the process of having a market-based economy and sought Indian participation in it through cooperation in various industrial and technological fields.

Dr. Sharma said India will be happy to cooperate with Poland in a manner mutually beneficial to both countries.

Foreign Ministers Meet

94AS0257B Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 4 Mar 94 pp 1, 6

[Text] New Delhi, March 3. The Polish Foreign Minister, Mr. Andrzej Olechowski, conveyed during his meeting with the Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Dinesh Singh, that the Pakistani resolution at the United Nations Human Rights Commission, now in session in Geneva, "did not enjoy his government's support."

Mr. Olechowski further said that Poland attached great emphasis on its relations with India in the context of India's international position and status.

The two Foreign Ministers discussed the ongoing reforms in the UN system where Mr. Dinesh Singh emphasised the need for strengthening the UN through greater democratisation and economic cooperation among member nations.

Mr. Dinesh Singh briefed his Polish counterpart on Pakistan's attempts to internationalise the Kashmir issue in the guise of human rights. In this context Mr. Dinesh Singh referred to Pakistan's own "abysmal" human rights record. He further pointed out that the political process in that State could easily begin if Pakistan stopped abetting terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

India and Poland called for "fresh and innovative approaches" to develop strong and multi-dimensional cooperation in various areas, particularly the economic and industrial sectors and in setting up joint ventures in science and technology and agriculture fields.

"There are conducive conditions, to expand cooperation in promoting joint economic ventures in a wide range of areas from mining and industrial machinery to chemical and metal products," the President, Mr. S.D. Sharma said at a banquet hosted by him in honour of the visiting Polish President, Mr. Lech Walesa here on Thursday night.

Dr. Sharma said the changes which have taken place in both countries needed fresh approach and it was gratifying to note that the Joint Business Council was bringing the entrepreneurs of "our countries together." Mr. Walesa, who was accorded a ceremonial welcome in the morning, on his arrival on a six-day State visit held talks with the President on various bilateral matters and issue of mutual interest.

Mr. Walesa said his country attached great importance to his talks with the Indian leaders as the world was looking for new solutions following the dismemberment of the Soviet Union.

Dr. Sharma said the dramatic developments that had occurred in Poland in the last decade were an important catalyst in changing not only the face of Europe, but in ending the cold war and thus, transforming international relations.

He also lauded Mr. Walesa's contribution in the Polish revolution.

The President said that India was fully committed to the democratic way of life. "It is only natural that the extraordinary changes which have taken place in Poland should strengthen and add new bonds of friendship between our two countries based on shared values and beliefs," he said.

"We look forward to the further development of friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation in the varied spheres of our interaction," Dr. Sharma further added.

He hoped that Mr. Walesa's visit would give fresh impetus to the close and abiding ties between India and Poland.

He said India greatly admired the Polish contribution to human knowledge and achievements. "We also value greatly the tradition of Indological studies in Poland," he said. [sentence as published]

Mr. Walesa in his speech said that Poland attached great importance to its contacts and cooperation with India.

"Our cooperation will bring benefit to our people and will strengthen the implementation of the economic reforms in both countries."

Planned Agreements

Madras *THE HINDU* in English 5 Mar 94 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, March 4. Indian and Polish leaders today held wide-ranging political discussions encompassing issues of bilateral and multilateral interests. The talks, in the presence of the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, and the visiting Polish President, Mr. Lech Walesa, resulted in three tentative agreements.

Finding a common view on the need to reform the U.N. system, the two countries decided to explore the possibility of jointly forwarding proposals for changes in the U.N. system, including a "change in the status of some countries."

Mr. Walesa later told presspersons that Poland shared the Indian view that there was need for a reform of the U.N., including making it more effective. In this context, Mr. Walesa announced that the representatives of the two countries at the U.N. would present a report on how the positions of the two countries could be coordinated and a joint initiative launched in this regard.

The second agreement on coordination at an international forum was in the context of the GATT. Here, the two decided to consult each other on specific issues, especially in the case of textiles in which India has substantial interests.

The third was in respect of jointly exploring business opportunities in third countries by pooling respective strengths. The private sector in the two countries would prepare the report in this context and present it to the respective Governments.

Giving a resumé of his discussions with Indian leader's, Mr. Walesa said detailed talks had revealed that there were no areas of differences between the two countries. On the other hand, prospects of economic cooperation were immense and these should be exploited for mutual benefit.

On issues of nuclear weapons, the Polish President reiterated the position that his country was for a stop to nuclear proliferation after which the world should attempt to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction. "I

know it is a difficult task and may not be achieved in my time. The next generation will have to strive for it," Mr. Walesa added.

Similarly, on human rights, Mr. Walesa said Poland was against violation of human rights in any part of the world. With Indian leaders, he said the discussions on this subject were general in nature and no specific instances or places were mentioned.

The best system

The Polish President was repeatedly asked for his views on the trade union movement and the future of communism. To every query he stated that he believed in a strong trade union movement which could put pressure on the owners, either private or the State. "But the pressure should not be so strong as to kill the enterprise, like bacteria which eats away the vitals of the body," he added.

Mr. Walesa was also categorical in stating that he believed that the capitalist form of development was the best system, but not brutal capitalism which had exploitation as its main plank. "Some call it capitalism with a human face. That, I think, is what is needed."

Investment invited

Earlier, the Polish President had a meeting with Indian industrialists where he invited investment. Stating that his country could serve as a stepping stone to the European market, he assured the industrialists that "every penny invested in Poland will fetch high returns."

Till the mid-eighties, Poland was one of the major trading partners in the Socialist bloc. However, with that country pulling out of the rupee trade agreement, bilateral trade shrank considerably.

Mr. Walesa expressed the hope that with his visit to India, bilateral trade and investment would go up considerably. The investment climate there was quite friendly and foreign investment was allowed in various segments of the economy, including portfolio investments, the industrialists were told.

Dinesh Singh's Visit to Iran Reported

94AS0255H Madras *THE HINDU* in English
6 Mar 94 p 1

[Article by Anand K. Sahay: "India, Iran Agree on Human Rights"]

[Text] Tehran, March 5. In an hour-long meeting between the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, and the Iranian Foreign Minister, Mr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, India and Iran today agreed that human rights should not be used as a political ploy against countries.

In a separate development, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr. Qian Qichen, who is also currently here noted that his country believed that issues such as human

rights should not be used as a weapon to exert pressure on countries because, every country was ruled according to its own social and religious systems.

The identity of views thus emanating from three foreign ministers of leading Asian states appears to indicate growing political conversions on critical political issues in the international context.

The Indian and Iranian foreign ministers also agreed today that India and Pakistan should sort out their problem in Kashmir through bilateral negotiations.

These developments have led to interesting speculations here whether Iran would not abstain on the Pakistani resolution in Geneva, and go a step further and canvass.....[sentence as published]

Setting out the perspective for his two-day visit to Iran, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh, told *THE HINDU* before landing at the Mehrabad airport here that "India, Iran, China, the Gulf and ASEAN could form a tremendous basis for Asian cooperation."

While Mr. Singh is here for the seventh meeting of the Indo-Iran Joint Commission at the Ministerial level which would focus on enhancing economic and commercial ties to a prominent new level, it is difficult to miss the warm political undercurrents with which the External Affairs Minister's visit is awash.

The Indian and the Chinese Foreign Ministers are slated to discuss substantive bilateral and regional issues tomorrow.

This would only be their second one-to-one interaction, the last being at the session of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

Mr. Singh is expected to suggest to his Chinese counterpart that the process of establishing peace and tranquility on the line of Actual Control (LAC) between the two countries be speeded up with a view to relatively early realisation, rather than be allowed to languish like the earlier boundary talks.

On Kashmir, India could tell the Chinese dignitary that so far human rights had been a tool employed by the West for political purposes against developing countries. It was ironical that Pakistan should seek to exploit the same route at Geneva against India.

The Chinese anxiety naturally centres on Tibet, and Mr. Qian could take the opportunity of his meeting with Mr. Singh to convey his worries over an international conference of Parliamentarians on Tibet in the Indian capital later this month. It is expected that the External Affairs Minister would inform the Chinese dignitary that the Government of India had no role in the proposed conference.

Contrary to earlier belief, Mr. Singh would deliver a letter from the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao

to the Iranian President, Mr. Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, whom he calls on tomorrow.

Mr. Rao is understood to have invited the Iranian President for an official visit. His letter may be expected to adhere to protocol norms of wishing more fulsome bilateral ties.

Mr. Singh told this correspondent that "There is tremendous possibility of close economic cooperation between Iran and India, and this could enhance prosperity in the whole region."

After a lull, India and Iran picked up the threads of their relations once again with a visit to India in March, 1992 by the Iran Foreign Minister.

This was at Mr. Velayati's own initiative.

Since then the pace of strengthening ties has been very quick. Mr. Velayati had urged taking bilateral relations to a higher level, and also cooperation with India at the Nonaligned Forum, clearly in view of the pressures brought against both countries by the U.S.

Editorials Hail Diplomatic Victory in Geneva

Fresh Initiative Urged

94AS0260A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 11 Mar 94 p 8

[Editorial: "Diplomatic Victory for India"; all quotation marks as published]

[Text] The diplomatic misadventure of Pakistan in Geneva is paralleled only by its military misadventure in 1965. The issue at stake on both occasions was Kashmir. The diplomatic sparring that has been going on for the last few months between the two countries, beginning in Davos at the World Economic Forum and the Geneva events of the past one month will, in the long run, prove to be momentous for both countries. The jubilation in Indian diplomatic circles at the last minute withdrawal by Pakistan of a resolution on human rights violations in Kashmir is understandable. At no-time in the recent past has India managed to put it across to its opponent as far as diplomatic coups were concerned. In the last one month, it was heartening to see that India shed its low key diplomatic postures and launch a propaganda offensive against Pakistan as an exporter of terrorism. Having tasted success, the Indian think tank's proclivity to relax after wresting the initiative is unlikely to be seen this time around. Five years of low-cost, low-intensity conflict from across the border and the tension, uncertainty and the cult of violence that has come to grip the people of Kashmir is unlikely to be forgotten easily. Nor is it going to be easy for the Indian foreign policy-makers to

forget the nerve wracking tension imposed on them till the very last minute before Islamabad bowed to the majority viewpoint of the members of the United Nations Human Rights Commission [UNHRC].

The diplomatic disaster will not go down easily with the powers that be in Pakistan. Ms. Benazir Bhutto, who so fully identified herself with the resolution will now have to face the wrath of Muslim League leader, Mr. Nawaz Sharif. Embittered Pakistanis will only see defeat in the move to table the resolution and later its withdrawal as counter-productive. They will fail to see that Pakistan has successfully managed to project the Kashmir issue to an international audience. But, for the time being, there is certain to be massive opposition criticism and a backlash effect on Ms. Benazir Bhutto's government for the loss of face at an international forum, that too, in what is seen as a victory to India. Mr. Nawaz Sharif can be expected to take full advantage of the situation and harp on the fact that the Prime Minister has let down both Kashmiris and Pakistan and had bungled the whole issue.

The final result was made possible by the realistic stand taken by the member nations, particularly, China and Iran. Though the latter two countries have much to hide from UNHRC, that warrant their support to India, much the same can be said about most other nations of the world, including North America. The tactical withdrawal took place after it was agreed that a mission of ambassadors would visit Kashmir to assess the human rights situation there. It is now up to India to hammer home the advantage and press for meaningful bilateral dialogues. The foreign secretaries level meeting between the two countries held in January were a disaster. Dialogue needs to be renewed afresh with respect to 'no-first-use' of nuclear weapons, 'line of peace and tranquillity' along the Line of Control, demilitarisation of the Siachen Glacier, demarcation of the maritime boundary in the Sir Creek area, resolving the controversy over the Tulbul navigation project, and reviving the Joint Working Commission. The parleys between the two countries have been stifled by unreasonable postures by both countries, at different points of time, and no bilateral progress looks likely unless Pakistan drops the plebiscite, and now, the human rights violations proposals. Given the latest misadventure and the adverse fall out at home, one can only expect a hardened stand from the Pakistani side. It is thus left to India to put forth fresh proposals and wrest the initiative. Along with such confidence building exercises, the Government of India must ensure that the borders are tightly sealed and that drug trafficking and export of arms into the country are completely stopped. As far as the extremists and the militants are concerned, the failure of the resolution at UNHRC sends an unmistakable message that internationalisation of the Kashmiri issue does not work.

Restoration on Normality Needed

94AS0260B Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 11 Mar 94 p 8

[Editorial: "Triumph in Geneva"]

[Text] Pakistan's decision to withdraw its controversial resolution, criticising India's human rights record in Kashmir, from the United Nations Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva is a singular triumph for Indian diplomacy. All those who participated at the Geneva event, from the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, and the minister of state for external affairs, Mr. Salman Khursheed, to the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and various officials deserve praise for their persuasive role as indeed do the Prime Minister and the external affairs minister. Procrastination followed by resolve is typical of the Indian style but it also has to do with the nature of democratic polity that functions best under pressure. After years of agonising and indeed dithering, India finally spelt out the bottom-line on Kashmir by telling the world what the Pakistani game was all about. The most important point related to the fact that Pakistan was attempting to use a U.N. forum for propaganda purposes despite its clandestine role in sponsoring terrorism. If it was genuinely concerned about the plight of the Kashmiris, it could have taken up India's offer made in January for talks rather than concentrate all its energies on the Geneva meeting. Eventually it took Iran, along with China, Syria, Indonesia, Malaysia and a number of other countries not unfriendly to Pakistan to tell it that such an issue is best handled through bilateral discussions. The congruence of interests in this context among India, Iran and China has portents for the future which Pakistan needs to examine carefully.

It is not very clear why Pakistan chose such a desperate course. Perhaps Ms. Bhutto was acting under domestic pressure; perhaps Islamabad misread the signals from Washington. There is more than a grain of truth in the government of India's charge that the United States by its recent utterances on Kashmir is responsible for the sharp deterioration in India-Pakistan relations. But Ms. Bhutto has no one but herself to blame for the distasteful and shrill tone of Pakistani statements last month. By calling Mr. Salman Khursheed a "rented Muslim," they were insulting a Muslim community bigger than their own and in calling India the "sick man of Asia," they ultimately compelled the latter to show the world where the basic cause of the disease lay. For years, India had been unable to utilise properly the mountain of material at its disposal, confirming Pakistan's involvement in the terrorist activities in the Kashmir valley. With the challenge in Geneva, it was able to do so in a convincing fashion, a task no doubt assisted by its willingness to encourage the representatives of various nations to see for themselves the grim realities of the state. Perhaps India felt compelled to act in Geneva because it could have been the beginning of a process that would have seen India being pilloried by the Organisation of Islamic

Countries as well as by the U.N. general assembly later this year. By effectively countering the threat of being blamed for the wrong reasons, and by spelling out the limits of what it is willing to offer in Kashmir, India has forestalled such a possibility. Its next move should be to act swiftly to restore normality in the state.

Paper Reports Speeches at Human Rights Session**Gupta Address 4 Mar**

94AS0258A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 5 Mar 94 pp 1, 17

[Text] Geneva, March 4. India has cautioned the U.N. Human Rights Commission [UNHRC] about the threats posed to sovereign states by across-the-border sponsorship of terrorism and urged the global community to take necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism, reports PTI.

"The need is to take cognisance of the urgency before it is too late. And to ensure that this recognition is made actionable without any delay," the Indian delegation has told the session of the U.N. Human Rights Commission.

Sharing with international community India's experience of the phenomenon of terrorism "which today looms as a spectre over the world and in its various forms and manifestations has come to signify a pervasive and organised threat to human rights in their widest form," Mr. Madhukar Gupta of the Indian delegation told the commission that "terrorism is now getting support from across international orders."

Mr. Gupta asked: "Is the international community going to continue to look on as a mute spectator, even as human rights slogans and fora are being used to cover the sponsorship and practices of terrorism?"

He said terrorism as witnessed in India was also a direct attempt to destroy the very structures and institutions of democracy, which alone provides the surest basis and foundation for civil society and the protection of human rights."

Mr. Gupta said "we have witnessed direct and targetted attacks on a massive scale on politicians, the judiciary, the press and government officials."

"These are the fundamental institutions of governance and the pillars of democracy. If these were to be destroyed, we could only have a situation where the law of the jungle would replace the rule of the law, where propaganda and disinformation on which terrorism thrives, would replace legitimate expression by the people through representative institutions and the media, and mechanisms for grievance redressal would become dependent upon the whims of those who promulgate dictats".

He said terrorism is also being used for the blatant spread of fundamentalism and creation of social and religious cleavages and divides in countries and societies. This has resulted in examples of "ethnic cleansing" and large-scale displacement of people in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

"We have witnessed efforts to change the very demographic profile of one particular part of the state—Kashmir valley."

"Targetted and brutal attacks on members of minority community there have forced a massive exodus of thousands of people from their homes. All this has been accompanied by blatant attempts to whip up religious emotions and frenzy and to distort and radicalise religion, which has been resulted in the destruction of hundreds of schools providing modern, secular education, thus jeopardising the future of hundreds of thousands of children," Mr. Gupta said.

Addressing the session, Dr. Shakti Bhan, a member of the delegation of All-India Women's Conference, apprised the international community of the plight of the minority community in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dr. Bhan, a leader of the women's wing of Panun Kashmir, said "we are fighting a battle for freedom from terror, freedom from religious bigotry and fundamentalism which Pakistan is seeking to impose upon us, freedom from hatred and prejudice, and freedom from the fear of the gun which Pakistan is seeking to spread in our area."

She said "we want our thousands of years old culture of human unity and dignity back from the clutches of those who want to enslave us and are trying to hold us in terror."

Dr. Bhan urged the international community to "help us in this endeavour by pressurising Pakistan to stop proliferating terrorism, for on this depends the return of peace to our troubled paradise."

Meanwhile, some pro-Pakistan non-governmental organisations (NGO) have stepped up India-baiting by raising the bogey of rights violations in Kashmir, as it became clear today that Islamabad may go ahead with its resolution on Jammu and Kashmir at the U.N. Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) session here.

Spearheading the tirade on Kashmir was the International Educational Development (IED), a U.S. based NGO known for its pro-Pakistan stance.

The IED delegation raised the question of right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir.

Kaul Speech 5 Mar

94AS0258B Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA
in English 6 Mar 94 p 22

[Article by Subhash Kirpekar: "India Rebutts Pak Charges"]

[Text] Geneva, March 5. India, in its first right of reply at the United Nations Human Rights Commission session here, said that the statement made by the leader of the Pakistani delegation, Mr. Iqbal Akhund regarding the self-determination of the Kashmiri people is "neither justified nor factual."

The former foreign secretary and envoy, Mr. T.N. Kaul, who exercised the right to reply said that Mr. Akhund's statement more closely reflected the "condition of people living in Pakistan occupied Kashmir and the northern territories where free and fair elections have not been held so far, where fundamental freedoms are suppressed ruthlessly."

"Even inside Pakistan, atrocities committed by Pakistani army and security forces in Sindh, Baluchistan, and the Frontier Provinces are well known," he said while objecting to Pakistan internationalising bilateral problems thereby making a solution more difficult.

Referring to the Shimla agreement signed when he was foreign secretary, Mr. Kaul said that what Pakistan was doing for the last four years was a blatant violation of this pact. It had set up training bases in PoK [Pakistan Occupied Kashmir] and in Pakistan itself for militants armed and financed and guided to commit acts of sabotage, subversion, loot and arson in both Punjab and J and K. "They have failed in Punjab and are failing in Jammu and Kashmir also. Hence, their attempt to internationalise the issue," he added.

Stating that he was born and brought up in Kashmir, unlike Mr. Iqbal Akhund, and some who did not even speak the Kashmiri language but claimed to be Kashmiris, Mr. Kaul rejected the accusation that "India's terrorism in Kashmir was supported by draconian laws."

"When misguided youths and local insurgents are aided, abetted instigated by a neighbouring country to commit loot, arson, rape and murder and drive at the point of the gun, minorities and even Muslims who do not agree with them, from their hearths and homes, no government worth its salt can shirk its duty to protect the people against such acts," Mr. Kaul replied.

Till the end of 1993, over 11,000 Kalashnikovs, 700 machine guns, 600 rocket launchers, 15,000 hand grenades besides wireless sets, rockets and a lot of ammunition and explosives had been captured, all supplied by the Pakistan ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] to the insurgents, he said. A recently captured foreign mercenary admitted to having raped 85 women, all Muslims, as there were hardly any non-Muslim women left in the valley.

Ms. Karen Parker of the International Educational Development, an NGO, demanded that, the promised plebiscite in Kashmir be conducted now so that the 40-year old UN resolution could be implemented. "The occupying power responds with the barrel of the gun, 600,000 strong, aimed at the Kashmiri people. Is this what the Commission means by democratic process?" she asked. The Kashmiris may not have oil, unlike Kuwait, but they had a passionate yearning for their promised plebiscite, she said.

The NGOs from Pakistan who spoke on the subject were Dr. (Ms.) Attiya Inayatullah of the World Muslim Congress and Mr. Syed Nazir Gilani of the World Society of Victimology. Mr. Gilani said that "while armed separatists were said to be responsible for kidnapping and killing government officials as well as members of the paramilitary forces and civilians, serious concerns had also been expressed over a large number of killings by the Indian security forces. Victims of torture included policemen, he said. The UN had procrastinated in its will and India had frustrated every opportunity to investigate the breach of these violations, he said.

Dr. Inayatullah, who has created some controversy because of her being chairman of the executive board of UNESCO as well as adopting the role of an NGO, relied on statistics provided by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference to depict the human rights situation in the Valley and called Dr. Farooq Abdullah a "quisling".

In an oral intervention by International Pen, the world association of writers representing members in 87 countries, Ms. F. Assaad said that Pen did not condemn anti-terrorist legislation *per se* and indeed recognised that legal measures were by far the most effective instrument in the struggle against violent insurgency. However, it was concerned that such legislation often including clauses which could lead to violations of the rights of those not advocating violence. In India, TADA [Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act] contained clauses which penalised the right of freedom of expression. It stated that such acts included views through speech or any other media.

Rao Parliament Speeches of 8 Mar Reported

Lok Sabha Speech Summarized

94AS0259A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 9 Mar 94 p 9

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, March 8: The Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, announced on Tuesday the government's determination to put an end to 'export of terrorism' by Pakistan into India and also to focus world attention on the basic case of Pakistan's illegal occupation of some areas of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Replying to the discussion on the motion of thanks to the President's address in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Rao firmly declared amidst applause from members that the resolution recently adopted by Parliament on Kashmir would be implemented "in letter and spirit" and the government would foil any attempt from any quarter to interfere in the internal affairs of India.

The House later adopted the motion with voice vote, rejecting the Opposition amendments.

This was probably the first time that the Prime Minister came out with a statement indicating that India would now go in for a counter-offensive against Pakistan's propaganda about violation of human rights in Kashmir. He also termed Pakistan as an 'aggressor'.

A total rejection of the demand for carving out of new States, a strong defence of the Dunkel proposals, a rebuttal of the slogan that India was buckling under outside pressures in economic matters and an assurance that the government would have talks with party leaders to decide on electoral reforms and the issue of identity cards to voters were the highlights of the Prime Minister's hour-long speech.

Mr. Rao's speech was bold, assertive and aggressive and drew cheers from the treasury benches. Obviously, the government securing a clear majority in the House emboldened the Prime Minister.

On the Ram Janmabhoomi controversy, the Prime Minister said the Supreme Court was seized of the matter and hearing has started. He appealed to the members not to be agitated over it because once the Supreme Court gives its opinion, action would be initiated on the lines of opinion. The government would come to the House and take its opinion and arrive at a consensus after the court verdict.

Mr. Rao pointed out that a look at the President's addresses during the last three years would clearly bring out the change that was taking place every year. The year 1992 reflected the economic crisis facing the country and the reforms proposed, 1993 referred to the threat to the very survival of India as a nation and its secular character while 1994 started on a note of optimism, on which they have to build up now.

On Kashmir issue, he said there existed two, three complications which needed to be disentangled. The government was dealing with utmost patience and firmness the problem of Pakistan exporting terrorism into the Valley. This had to be tackled on many fronts. The latest the government thought of was the need to intensify development efforts in Jammu and Kashmir. More details in this regard would be given to the House at the appropriate time. The need for involvement of people in development activities and better coordination was given attention to.

He said Pakistan was creating problems for India and harping on violation of human rights in Kashmir out of its own internal compulsions. India had to face the

situation. "Our record is clear. Wherever there are excesses, action is being taken". To say that there was violation of human rights in Kashmir is factually wrong and "we refuse it".

The Prime Minister declared that terrorism in Kashmir would be put down with an iron hand and the territorial integrity of India would be protected. Nothing would come in the way of efforts in this direction. The sufferings of people of Kashmir, as a result of terrorism, should be ended. "We are determined to see that export of terrorism from Pakistan is stopped".

Stating that Pakistan's propaganda against India on human rights was "totally uncalled for", he questioned Pak's *locus standi* to raise the issue when it was an aggressor. In this context, he said that India's basic case on Kashmir had taken a back seat, while irrelevant issues like human rights had come to the surface. The world has to be told about this.

Mr. Rao referred to the demands for new States gaining momentum and made it clear that the "time and the situation do not warrant carving of new States". "This is no time for us to open the Pandora's box for new States", he said and assured that steps would be taken to develop the backward areas, keeping in view the demand for creation of Jarkhand, Uttarakhand, etc. short of carving of new States, ways to solve the problems of backward areas and better treatment to them would be attended to.

Terming the problems being faced in the North East as 'complex', he said that the region needed special attention and the government was giving greater attention to stop infiltration from outside.

The Prime Minister said that on the whole the situation in the country had stabilised now, creating confidence among the people outside and within the country that the economic activity had now been accelerated. Following this, massive investments were coming to the country in infrastructure sector. "Never before did we have a shot in the arm as we are having today", but much more needed to be done.

He pointed out that the massive step up in the outlay for rural development from Rs [rupees] 7,000 crore in the Seventh Five Year Plan to Rs 30,000 crore in the Eighth Plan reflected the government's determination to develop rural areas. The impact of the schemes on rural poverty and rural unemployment were studied by independent groups and it was revealed the benefits were accruing to rural people.

He said that the outlays for rural development in the Ninth Plan was proposed to be fixed at Rs. 90,000 crore. Rural areas would be blooming with activity, he added.

Mr. Rao ridiculed the slogan that the government's decisions were influenced by international agencies. Whatever the government was doing was "totally" its

own plans based on the needs of the people. It was not correct to say that decisions were taken at the instance of outside agencies.

He stated that the Dunkel proposals have become "a horse that was already dead", but everyone was still flogging it. "I have gone into every aspect of the Dunkel proposals, particularly on the agriculture side. I reiterate that on the agriculture side we have nothing to lose, but we are having much to gain", he declared.

The Prime Minister further said that exporters of agricultural products would get a shot in the arm due to Dunkel proposals. "I don't find Indian farmers suffering anywhere because of the Dunkel".

Responding to interruptions from Opposition members, he assured them that the government was prepared for a debate on the Dunkel proposals. Certain comments being made on these proposals stating that the interests of the farmers would be adversely affected were totally baseless.

When Mr. Nitish Kumar (JD [Janata Dal]) said that the farmers would have no right to multiply the seeds, the Prime Minister shot back saying that India would have its own law in this regard. The Bill would be coming in this session itself.

Mr. Rao gave the details progress in the implementation of the three schemes introduced by the government in 1993 for the benefit of the poor, particularly rural women and urban youth and also the schemes meant for welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.

Clarifying the points raised by Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan (JD), Mr. Somnath Chatterjee (CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist]) and Mr. Jaswant Singh (BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]) and others, the Prime Minister said that he would consult leaders of political parties on electoral reforms, issue of identity cards and other allied matters. Stating that the government had no bias on any of these matters, he said that whatever was decided by all the parties would be implemented. He said he would convene a meeting of party leaders to discuss the issue. The government would not take any hasty decision, he assured.

He said that the progress of implementation of land reforms during the last two years was commendable.

Mr. Rao told Mr. Paswan that the government had not shelved any programme meant for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes initiated by the earlier JD government. On the other hand, the government had added new schemes.

He said the Finance Minister would give details about the action taken on JPC [Joint Parliamentary Committee] report on securities scam. On Bofors investigation, he said the government was yet to receive the documents from Geneva Cantonal court.

'Message to U.S.'

94AS0259B Madras *THE HINDU* in English
9 Mar 94 p 13

[Article by K.K. Katyal: "PM Conveys Message to U.S."]

[Text] New Delhi, March 8. The Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, was noticeably cautious in his references to the Indo-U.S. relations—while briefly dealing with foreign policy matters in his reply to the Lok Sabha debate on the motion of thanks to the President's address.

While Mr. Rao pointedly mentioned the progress on economic, cultural and other fronts, he roundly talked of certain statements from Washington which had generated misgivings. But instead of elaborating on the second issue or dealing specifically with the points of disagreement, he merely repeated the implied references in the President's address—"We look forward to working with the United States towards mutual understanding, including those issues on which such understanding needs enhancement. This will reflect the vibrant democratic and secular ideals of our two countries".

Paraphrasing the President's words, Mr. Rao said there were areas where understanding was lacking and the address made the country's stand clear. Mr. Rao confined himself to recalling that the Home Minister (Mr. S.B. Chavan) had explained the government's position in Parliament the other day. Now Mr. Chavan had used strong words against Washington's stand, taking exception to the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's statement at the credential presentation ceremony of the new Pakistan Ambassador that "we share Pakistan's concerns about human rights abuses in Kashmir". Mr. Rao, however, chose not to elaborate any of the points, dealt with by the Home Minister.

In his reply to the debate in the Rajya Sabha later, the Prime Minister maintained the same cautious line. India's response, he said, had to be calibrated and "if a statement comes and next day there is clarification, you have to take it together. We are not in the habit of knee-jerk reaction."

The net result of the two pronouncements is that India on the one hand made its stand abundantly clear on the "statements from Washington", while, on the other hand, it projected a posture of caution at the highest level. None in Washington was left in any doubt about the feelings of the Government (as also of the political parties and various sections of public opinion). At the same time, none in the U.S. Administration could link the Prime Minister with tough words against the American attitude to India. Even otherwise, Mr. Rao had avoided commenting on the "statements from Washington", a euphemism for Mr. Clinton's recent references to Kashmir—contained, apart from the credential ceremony speech, in the President's address at the U.N. General Assembly and in his reply to a private American

citizen, connected with a blatantly anti-India outfit—as also his statements on Punjab. New Delhi left it to the foreign office spokesman to reply to what were regarded highly objectionable points.

By recalling Mr. Chavan's strongly-worded statements, Mr. Rao impliedly provided the endorsement. That the Home Minister's off-the-cuff observations was evident from the way he repeated his points, first made in the Lok Sabha, in the Upper House—and that, too, after the U.S. Embassy here conveyed its unhappiness, in a letter to Mr. Chavan, with a copy to the External Affairs Ministry. On March 2, Mr. Chavan (in the Lok Sabha) charged the U.S. with developing a vested interest in Kashmir and wanted the country to be on guard, adding that Washington was interested neither in helping India nor Pakistan, "they would like to help themselves". He was equally sharp in criticising the U.S. interference in Jammu and Kashmir.

On March 4 (in the Rajya Sabha), Mr. Chavan, while dealing with the U.S. Embassy's unhappiness with his earlier statement, stood his ground and reiterated his charge of interference against the U.S.

The exploratory talks through diplomatic channels for a meeting of the Prime Minister and Mr. Clinton are unlikely to be affected (in view of Mr. Rao's caution). That New Delhi's stand was made clear was an important factor.

Foreign Secretary Srinivasan Meets Press

94AS0255S Hyderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 11 Mar 94 pp 1, 9

[Text] New Delhi, March 10: Pakistan had withdrawn voluntarily and unconditionally on Wednesday its loudly-publicised draft resolution it moved on February 25 at the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) at Geneva on alleged violation of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir.

This is nothing new for Pakistan. This is the third time in a series when Pakistan repeated the performance. For the first time it moved such a draft resolution at the UNHRC session in Geneva last year and for the second time at the 48th session of the UN General Assembly in 1993. Despite much propaganda and all the fanfare that followed, it refrained from tabling such a draft. On all these occasions it failed to mobilise necessary support.

India hopes that these failures would induce Pakistan to look at all outstanding Indo-Pakistani bilateral issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a constructive way and agree to start talks with India with a view to settling the issues bilaterally.

This hope was expressed by the new Foreign Secretary, Mr. Krishnan Srinivasan, at his first-ever press conference here on Thursday that lasted for about 30 minutes.

Mr. Srinivasan also hoped that Pakistan's response to the six non-papers India gave to Pakistan and the Indian

response to Pakistan's two non-papers would be constructive and soon the Foreign Secretary-level dialogue would resume.

Giving the details of what happened in Geneva on Wednesday, the Foreign Secretary stated that the Iranian resolution, which facilitated the Pakistani withdrawal, was unilateral.

Claiming that India was always confident of winning the vote, Mr. Srinivasan stated "we wanted the vote to be held at the earliest" as we were confident a majority of those voting would go against Islamabad.

He said the withdrawn resolution stood automatically lapsed and Pakistan would have to start *de novo* at the next session of the UNHRC. This was confirmed by the United Nations secretariat as there was confusion whether the resolution was deferred till the next session.

Mr. Srinivasan said although Pakistan had announced its intention a day earlier to amend the resolution by dropping the reference to sending a fact-finding mission to Kashmir, it remained in its original form till the last moment. The dilution of the resolution was intended to gain the support of more countries as a majority of them did not want to get involved in a territorial issue. Also, the resolution had not mentioned the country to which the fact-finding mission would go.

Before the resolution was withdrawn, Iran made a statement that India had agreed to facilitate the visit of a group of Ambassadors of Islamic countries to visit Kashmir.

Besides Iran, 15 countries, including China, Syria, Indonesia, Malaysia, Tunisia, Libya, Nigeria, Brazil and Australia, asked Pakistan to withdraw the resolution.

He denied that there was any linkage between the Pakistani withdrawal and the Iranian suggestion for team of Organisation of Islamic (OIC) countries Ambassadors' visiting Jammu and Kashmir. The Iranian suggestion was not binding on India.

But any Ambassador stationed in India, excepting those of Pakistan and Libya, could visit any part of India, including Jammu and Kashmir, and report to his government as fact-finding was the normal duty of an Ambassador, the Foreign Secretary asserted. "They are most welcome to do that," he added.

Mr. Srinivasan pointed out that Ambassadors of 10 countries, including four Islamic nations, were already in Kashmir Valley to see things for themselves. One of the Islamic nations was Senegal, the present chairman of the OIC. Three others, including Iran, were to join them but could not do so due to preoccupation. There was no restrictions. India was prepared to extend whatever help these Ambassadors require, he added.

Mr. Srinivasan said that there was no scope for Iran or any other country on to mediate the Kashmir issue.

Referring to Iran's statement at Geneva on Wednesday that it would continue to work towards resolving the Kashmir issue, Mr. Srinivasan made it clear that India was neither bound by it nor did it constitute mediation. India had not made any compromises on the issue, he stated emphatically.

He added that Iran had made the statement on its own initiative and New Delhi would welcome it if Teheran succeeded in persuading Islamabad to create a climate for a constructive dialogue between India and Pakistan.

The Foreign Secretary lauded the role of Iran and China in persuading Pakistan to withdraw the resolution unconditionally.

Mr. Srinivasan said Pakistan, despite making at a prestige issue, had to withdraw the resolution unilaterally because of lack of support. The Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, had telephonic talks with many heads of government and State to enlist support for her country's resolution.

The Pakistan government even deputed senior ministers and officials to various countries for this purpose.

He said the Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Germany and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Dinesh Singh's meeting with the European troika and French leaders helped to place the Indian viewpoint more clearly and lucidly. These interactions proved vital for support to the Indian stand.

He said India had been able to convey the cause of human rights violation in the State and Pakistan's attempt to internationalise the issue in violation of the Shimla agreement. He said there was a great transparency in "our policy towards Kashmir."

Upper House Polls Give Congress-I Setback

94AS0255J Madras THE HINDU in English
5 Mar 94 p 1

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Gandhinagar, March 4. The ruling Congress suffered a severe setback today as it could win only two Rajya Sabha seats against the expected three. The voting pattern not only revealed disunity between the erstwhile JD(G) [Janata Dal-Gujarat] and the 'original' Congress but massive cross-voting in favour of the Opposition BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party].

The BJP won the other two seats though it had a strength of only 67 in the House of 178, enough to get only one. The party managed 24 'extra' votes and its little known nominee, Mr. Kanaksinh Mangrola topped the four winners with 49 votes. The party favourite, Ms. Anandiben Patel got 42 votes and stood second. Two votes were declared invalid.

The Congress stalwart, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki retained his seat with 33 votes and his runner-up, Mr. Raju Parmar maintained his seat with 28 votes. The

third candidate, Mr. J.V. Shah could get only 25 and lost the battle. With the support of nine independents and a lone member of the Lok Swaraj Manch, the Congress strength of 98 had officially got augmented to 108.

Jolt to Urmila

The defeat of Mr. Shah, a hot favourite of the former JD(G) controlling 66 votes in the CLP [Congress-I Legislature Party], is considered to be a severe jolt to the claim of Ms. Urmila Patel, to succeed her late husband, Chimanbhai Patel.

If the talk in the lobby of the Assembly is any indication in the light of the poll outcome, then the Congress is in deep trouble. The JD(G) faction has already served an ultimatum to the party high command that under no circumstances would they accept a leader who did not belong to their ranks. On this point, the two feuding claimants of the faction, the second being the interim Chief Minister, Mr. Chhabildas Mehta, are united.

The ruling party has now two options. It should either dissolve the House and impose President's rule to enable the party prepare for the general elections, due next winter or just instal a compromise candidate, winning over a substantial number of JD(G) legislators promising them tickets.

The BJP is overjoyed. The party had worked overtime to entice the disgruntled elements and to particularly win the three votes of the Janata Dal (VP Singh).

"The Congress with its just 32 votes has bagged two seats and the JD(G) with its 66 votes has got nothing," said the party's poll manager and deputy leader, Mr. Suresh Mehta while stressing that the Government is now a minority one.

Assembly Elections in 4 States Announced

94AS0255L Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 4 Mar 94 p 6

[Text] New Delhi, March. 3.—In separate announcements the Election Commission said here today that elections to the Assemblies of Andhra, Goa, Karnataka and Sikkim will be held before December 31 without photo identity cards for the voters. The existing terms of Legislative Assemblies in these States are due to expire in December-January next.

It also announced that the by-elections to seven parliamentary constituencies and 15 Assembly constituencies in 11 States, including West Bengal will be held on May 26. The necessary notification for holding these elections will be issued on April 26.

By-elections will be held in the following seven parliamentary constituencies:

- Berhampore (West Bengal)
- Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh)
- Vaishali (Bihar)

- Rajgarh (Madhya Pradesh)
- Ahmednagar (Maharashtra)
- Baramati (Maharashtra)
- Mayurbhanj (ST [Scheduled Tribes]-Orissa)

The 15 Assembly constituencies to which by-elections will be held:

- Sandeshkhali (SC [Scheduled Castes]-W. Bengal)
- Serampore (West Bengal)
- Hamirpur (Himachal Pradesh)
- Raghogarh (Madhya Pradesh)
- Ajnala (Punjab)
- Nakodar (Punjab)
- Rajakhara (Rajasthan)
- Mylapore (Tamil Nadu)
- Perundurai (Tamil Nadu)
- Ghazipur (Uttar Pradesh)
- Manjhanpur (SC - UP [Uttar Pradesh])
- Jaswant Nagar (Uttar Pradesh)
- Kasganj (Uttar Pradesh)
- Nidhauri Kalan (U.P.)
- Hastinapur (SC - UP)

By-election to the South Delhi parliamentary constituency is also due for elections as Mr. Madan Lal Khurana (BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]), elected from here in 1991, had resigned from the seat following his election as Chief Minister of Delhi.

The Election Commission said that the by-election to South Delhi Parliamentary constituency would not be held till completion of the ongoing revision of the electoral rolls in Delhi.

The Election Commission has announced the dates for official purposes:

- Date of notification—April 26, 1994
- Last date for filing nominations—May 3, 1994
- Scrutiny of nominations—May 4, 1994
- Last date for withdrawal of candidatures—May 6, 1994
- The polling date, if necessary—May 26, 1994
- Completion of the election process—June 1, 1994.

Situation in Uttar Pradesh CPI Analyzed

94AS0255E Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 11 Mar 94 p 8

[Article by Mohit Sen: "CPI's Debacle in UP"]

[Text] An absolutely sensational development has taken place in Uttar Pradesh [UP] as far as the Communist Party of India [CPI] is concerned. And all said and done it is the CPI which is the main Communist formation in that sprawling and strategic State of the heartland of India. What happens to it is of the greatest relevance to all Communists there and throughout the country.

What has happened is that practically the entire veteran leadership of the CPI in Uttar Pradesh has collectively decided to join the Samajwadi Party led by Mr.

Mulayam Singh Yadav. These leaders include Mr. Mitra Sen Yadav who was at the time of his leaving the CPI the secretary of its Uttar Pradesh unit, an MLA [member of Legislative Assembly] from Fiazabad, just adjacent to Ayodhya. Joining him are Mr. Guru Prasad, for long the assistant secretary of the Uttar Pradesh unit of the CPI and for some time the all-India president of the Agricultural Labourers' Organisation of the CPI and Mr. Ramchander Baksh Singh, the veteran leader from Banabanki district and the sole CPI representative in the UP Legislative Council.

The most important of the rebels is Dr. Z.A. Ahmad. There are, of course, reports that he may not quit the CPI though he has not so far denied that he is with the rebels. He has, however, made it absolutely clear on many occasions that his sympathies lie with Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, whom he believes represents the wave of the future for defeating the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and advancing towards the emancipation of the oppressed. Dr. Ahmad is no ordinary leader of the CPI. It would be appropriate to recall just who he is. Coming from a highly placed family in the undivided Punjab he became a Communist in London in the early 1930s where he worked successfully for a doctorate in the London School of Economics. He, along with Sajjad Zaheer and Hiren Mukherjee, were the first of the "England returned" Communists to be followed a decade later by Mohan Kumaramangalam, Indrajit Gupta, Nikhil Chakravarty, N.K. Krishnan and others. On returning to India he plunged into the freedom struggle and soon drew attention to himself as that rare phenomenon of a highpowered intellectual who was also a mass worker. On top of it all he came from a distinguished Muslim family and was an ardent secularist, patriot and radical. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru took him to the AICC [All India Congress Committee] headquarters in Allahabad as one of his secretaries when he was the president of the Congress.

Among the other secretaries of Panditji was Dr. Ramanohar Lohia. The two learned lieutenants of the then Congress president got on well together since both strongly supported their leader's combining patriotism and nationalism with socialism. Dr. Lohia was just the opposite of what he later became. He was then a Nehruite. Dr. Ahmad was right from those days a convinced proponent of the need for Congress-Communist unity and also of the need to pay special attention to weaning the Muslim masses away from the influence of communalism.

Dr. Ahmad went on to become one of the tallest and best known leader of the then single CPI. He was a member of its all-India leadership from the forties and has been there in one or another official position for over half-a-century. It has to be said to his credit that he never accepted the official thesis of the CPI that the Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan represented the freedom urge of the Muslims and their desire for equality with the Hindus though in a distorted form. He never

accepted that the content of the demand for Pakistan was just though the form was perverse.

Much the most important characteristic of Dr. Ahmad was, however, his belief and personification of that belief that the Communists should also be Congressmen. All through his political life he has worn khadi and a Gandhi cap. He represented the very important tradition which is still alive in Uttar Pradesh of radical and revolutionary nationalism, i.e., of Congressmen who accepted Communism in one or another form and of Communists who accepted the Congress whatever its form. It is on the basis of this belief that he staunchly opposed the anti-national and so-called "Left" revolutionary line of Mr. B.T. Ranadive in 1948. He equally staunchly opposed the anti-Congress, obsessively anti-Nehru and "casteist socialism" of Dr. Lohia.

The tragedy of Dr. Ahmad, however, began, in the mid-1950s when for personal and factional reasons he opposed P.C. Joshi's call for a National Front of Congress, Communists and all progressives. From then onwards in one or another way he did his best to deny his past and to remain a Communist leader on the basis of accepting anti-Congressism in howsoever a sophisticated form. So down the slippery path he went till he landed up as the drum beater and pillion rider of Mr. V.P. Singh whom he portrayed as the new Messiah of the secularists and the downtrodden. He accepted what he had so valiantly fought in the "first fine careless rapture" of the passionate idealism of his Communist youth.

The CPI leaders and veterans who have gone or deciding to go to the Samajwadi Party have been motivated by various impulses. High on the list is the authoritarian behaviour of the Central leadership of the CPI which forced its UP unit to align—unsuccessfully in the matter of seats, as it turned out—with the Janata Dal of Mr. V.P. Singh. The MP [Member of Parliament] unit had wanted to ally with the Samajwadi Party because, in their view, it was the party most capable of defeating the BJP and also because it was not completely anti-Congress as demonstrated by its conduct during the no-confidence motion in the Lok Sabha. The so-called "young" leaders being encouraged at the Centre and in the States by the small coterie which functions as the effective all-India leadership of the CPI also cause concern and even a measure of revulsion among the veterans. The most influential factor behind the decision—of the CPI veterans in UP is, however, their lack of courage in breaking with anti-Congressism. They are trapped by the decades of anti-Congress campaigning within and outside their party that they have done. It is a Frankenstein which they cannot fight but have to obey.

Their anti-Congressism, however, is of a somewhat subtle variety. It is an anti-Congressism which postulates an alternative to the Congress which is also not with the BJP and can even ally with the Congress but which, in any case, not with Right reactionary or counter-revolutionary formation. On no account can they prove even to themselves that the Samajwadi Party is more

anti-imperialist, more nationalist and more secular than the Congress. As for being more effective than the latter in combatting the BJP this is true at the present moment in Uttar Pradesh. Elsewhere it is the Congress which undeniably occupies that preeminent position. Would Dr. Ahmad and his colleagues of UP advise that counterparts in other parts of India to join with the Congress on the basis of that logic?

In Andhra Pradesh, for example, it cannot be claimed that the TDP [Telugu Desam Party] is more capable of rallying the secular forces than the Congress. Nor can the same claim be made for the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] in Tamil Nadu. The erstwhile CPI veterans cannot blame their critics who change them with joining the Samajwadi Party for the sake of seats and other perks of power. They can answer their critics to some extent, out any rate, if they advocated what can be called the criterion of "anti-rightist effectiveness" as the basis of party and personal behaviour. This would clearly imply that allying with the Congress is a legitimate choice for communists. It would have important positive consequences for political alignments in the context, in particular of the elections due at the end of the year.

There is, however, a more basic point that needs to be made. The Samajwadi Party is not just an anti-BJP party. It is a specific type of anti-BJP party. It bases itself in reality, whatever be the figleaf rhetoric, on backward casteism and Muslim communalism. This is becoming clearer with every passing day. What else is the meaning of the caste clashes that are taking place in Uttar Pradesh and the rift that is so clearly developing between Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mr. Kanshi Ram? The situation in Uttar Pradesh has developed quickly only confirmation that one fragmenting force cannot be relied upon to combat another. In the end both conflict with modern and progressive nationalism which alone can be the basis of our country and people's advance.

New Regional Party Formed in Tripura

94AS0255N Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
2 Mar 94 p 11

[Text] Agartala, March 1.—A new regional party under the banner of United Regional Party of Tripura [URPT] was formed here yesterday, reports UNI.

Announcing this, the party leaders addressing a press conference here today said the main work of the party would be to protect the socioeconomic and political interest of the backward tribals and other ethnic groups.

A 10-member committee has been formed with the senior most CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr. Ashok Debbarma, as its convenor. They said that the Tripura National Volunteers [TNV], ruling Left Front's partner, Tripura Hill People's party, Tripura Upajati Juba Samity's youth wing, Tribal Students' Federation and the Tripura Upajati Karmachhari Samity would be the partners of the new body.

Mr. Debbarma, a founder member of the Communist Party in Tripura in the late 40s, along with the present Chief Minister, Mr. Dasaratha Deb, the former Chief Minister, Mr. Nripen Chakraborty, and the veteran Communist leader and former Minister, Mr. Biren Datta, alleged that the Left Front had failed to protect the interests of the tribals.

Mr. Debbarma announced that the URPT would launch a statewide movement in support of the genuine demands of the tribals from this month-end.

It would also support the TNV's *raasta roko* agitation, slated to begin from March 3 in protest against non-implementation of the tripartite TNV peace accord, signed on August 12, 1988.

Mr. Debbarma and the other leaders further alleged that all the political parties, including the ruling Left Front, had bluffed the tribals and were not sincere for the all-round development of the tribals.

BBC To Broadcast Extended South Asia Report

94AS0255I Madras *THE HINDU* in English
4 Mar 94 p 17

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Bombay, March 2. BBC radio will broadcast a half hour current affairs programme on South Asia every day from April 4. This was announced on Tuesday in Bombay by Mr. Alexander Thomson, the editor of the South Asia Report, which at present has a duration of 15 minutes.

"The expansion of South Asia Report at this time shows the commitment of the BBC to coverage of a region of immense political, economic and strategic importance," he said. Mr. Thomson and BBC's India correspondent, Mr. Mark Tully were in Bombay to honour Mr. Jonas Kurkalang from Dadar, Bombay, one of four prize winners of the 'Can you hear me' competition conducted last year by the South Asia Report. Amongst the other prize-winners are two from Madras and one from Nepal.

New office in Delhi: Mr. Tully pointed that the very fact that the BBC was increasing its coverage of South Asia emphasised the point that the organisation continued to be deeply committed to radio journalism. 'Radio is not going under and will not despite television', he said. He announced that the BBC was opening a new and modern office in Delhi which would be equipped to produce many of the programmes on the Hindi service which had earlier been produced in London.

Mr. Tully also emphasised that it was the success of BBC World Service television in India that had sparked the interest of so many others in the region. 'The BBC is determined to remain one of the main players regardless of how much competition there is', he said. He also pointed out that although Star TV had been taken over by the Australian media baron, Mr. Rupert Murdoch, BBC had a

contract with Star TV and "there is no sign that it will be broken even though it has an early get out clause."

Reorganisation: Discussing the future plans of the BBC, Mr. Thomson said that 'Bush House is going through fundamental reforms, almost a revolution in its history'. He was referring to the process of reorganisation taking place whereby the BBC planned to divide its coverage of the world into six regions. The eastern region would essentially be restricted to South Asia unlike in the past when it encompassed Iran and Afghanistan in the west and Myanmar in the east.

As part of the expansion of its coverage of the region, the BBC would be setting up an FM transmitter in Dhaka, Bangladesh and a studio in Islamabad, Mr. Thomson said. This was the only region where the BBC was expanding at a time when it was cutting back in many other parts of the world.

Mr. Thomson also announced that in response to feedback from listeners, the BBC would broadcast in South Asia on a new frequency of 7160 in addition to the present 15310 on which it was being broadcast. The expanded South Asia Report would begin with a nine minute world news bulletin at 0700 hrs IST [Indian Standard Time] followed by the current affairs programme.

Guidelines for Airline Operation Issued

94AS0255M Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 2 Mar 94 p 5

[Text] New Delhi, March 1.—Air India [AI] and Indian Airlines [IA] today, formally, began functioning as two public limited companies, paving way for what is widely perceived as a new chapter in better management and more competitive functioning in aviation.

While Government control over the two airlines continues, it is believed to be only a matter of time before private participation is invited—through widening of capital base of IA and A-I—in running the air carriers.

According to an official announcement here, while A-I, IA and Vayudoot will continue to provide scheduled air transport services, air taxi operators (ATO) have been permitted to apply to the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation [DGCA] for permission to operate private scheduled airlines.

The ATOs would, however, have to first comply with certain guidelines and regulations laid down by the Ministry of Civil Aviation for obtaining permission. The guidelines, according to officials, have been given the official seal after subjecting them to discussion with the key player of the domestic aviation industry last month.

The rules of operation are:

- A fleet strength of at least three aircraft registered in India with an all-up-weight of more than 5700 kg each
- Not less than Rs 15 crores subscribed equity capital in respect of operators having aircraft of all-up-weight

exceeding 40,000 kg, and not less than Rs 5 crores for operators having aircraft of all-up-weight not exceeding 40,000 kg

- Not less than three sets of flight crew and cabin crew per aircraft.
- An approved maintenance organization and facilities to carry out maintenance of aircraft up to 500 hours inspection or Check "B" for Boeing 737 aircraft.
- Approved manuals for operations, training and quality control-cum-maintenance.
- Cells for pre-flight medical examination of crew, flight planning and despatch, reliability, analysis of aircraft components and systems, detect investigation, compliance of service bulletins and modifications and records of major components.
- Security programme approved by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security and trained security personnel at all operating stations.

The Ministry has also laid down certain conditions for operating on different sectors.

(a) Those operating scheduled air transport service on any route specified under Category - I, will be required to provide a minimum scheduled service in Category II and Category III sectors. For rendering the prescribed minimum service on routes in Categories II and III, an operator may have the option to provide the service either by aircraft in his fleet or in another operator's fleet on mutually agreed terms. In the latter case, the arrangements should have prior approval of the DGCA.

(b) Operators shall abide by any further conditions which the DGCA may consider necessary for monitoring of scheduled air transport service and operation.

Air Force Modernization 'Hopelessly Awry'

94AS0255T Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA
in English 13 Mar 94 p 13

[Text] While a debate rages on over the real extent of the hike in the defence budget announced in Parliament last month, the fact remains that it provides little for any worthwhile modernisation or major acquisition. Defence, ironically, continues to remain a low priority area for a country which has fought four wars and still faces a proxy war. In the present defence environment, each of the three arms is important. Ignoring one at the cost of the others would be far from judicious.

For the navy and the Indian Air Force (IAF), the prevailing resource crunch and the low budgetary allocation is an issue of particular concern. While the army is manpower-oriented, both the navy and the air force are dependent on technology and capital. Both these requirements go together, ruling out any scope for compromise on either.

For the IAF, the going has been particularly worrisome. Even the air chief had conceded at a news conference at the Bangalore air show last December that managing the IAF with the prevailing resource crunch was "damn tough".

The reality is indeed harsh. Not only have modernisation plans suffered, but also the operational capabilities of the air force, which had performed heroically in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. Worse, the IAF has become an aged air force, with a fleet that is almost obsolete in today's state-of-the-art environment. And tragically for the IAF, the onset of the decline has coincided with the Gulf war, which has left no doubt about the vital role air power will play in future wars.

Most of the IAF aircraft are Soviet-made and very old. Over half of the IAF's combat aircraft need to be replaced or upgraded. The IAF, like the other two services, is faced with a severe resource crunch following the collapse of its long-standing defence ally, the Soviet Union. Further, it lacks an advance jet trainer (AJT), is short of spares, lacks adequate modern electronic equipment, weapon systems and force multipliers, and needs a better air defence ground environment system (ADGES), including more sophisticated early warning systems and surface to air missiles (SAMs).

There is an absence of any strategic thinking on the part of defence ministry policy-makers, who are mostly bureaucrats with little experience or professional understanding of defence issues. The three services have been reduced to begging for bare essentials.

The bulk of the IAF's 39 combat squadrons comprises the MiG-21 fighter-interceptors. Nine of these squadrons, which are of 1960s vintage, are beyond upgradation and ought to have been phased out years ago. But there is simply no money. Also, the MiG-21 bis squadrons urgently need upgrading with modern avionics and weapon systems. Unfortunately, the government continues to procrastinate, paying little heed to the cost and time-sensitive frame needed for this frontline defence aircraft. These need to be operational for at least 15 more years so as to be replaced with the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), scheduled to fructify by 2005.

The four MiG-23 BN (ground attack) squadrons are similarly outdated and are in the process of being replaced by the MiG-27, an updated version, currently being assembled by HAL [Hindustan Aeronautics Limited] at Ozhar (Maharashtra). The MiG-27, of which the IAF has squadrons, is a uni-role tactical air strike aircraft (TASA), which again has a limited range. About four years hence, these too will require upgradation. Thus by 2005, the MiG-27 fleet is more likely to resemble today's MiG-21 fleet, with little scope for replacement.

A similar picture is that of the Jaguars. This British strike aircraft, currently being assembled by HAL in Bangalore, is of early 1970 vintage. The 4.5 squadrons available to the IAF comprise half a squadron of the maritime strike version, the only squadron of its kind in the IAF. Of the remaining four Jaguar squadrons, two squadrons require urgent upgrading.

Thus, the only modern aircraft with the IAF today are the two squadrons of the French state-of-the-art, fly-by-wire, multi-role Mirage-2000 aircraft and three

squadrons of the Soviet MiG-29 uni-role air superiority aircraft. In January, the IAF had lost a Mirage-2000 to a bird hit, taking the total of Mirage-2000s lost so far to four. In early February, the IAF lost a MiG-29 taking the number of MiG-29s lost also to four. While the Mirage-2000, then valued at Rs 43 crore, was inducted in 1985, the MiG-29 entered the IAF only in 1987.

While the IAF continues to maintain its aged air force, the Pakistani and Chinese air forces, by contrast, have been involved in a steady modernisation programme. Despite the Pressler amendment, not only has the PAF [Pakistan Air Force] managed to regularly service and get spare parts for its F-16s, but also reportedly managed to increase flying hours on its F-16s by about 10 per cent.

The IAF top brass is convinced that the US, will find some way to deliver 71 more F-16s that are being sought by the PAF, the Pressler amendment notwithstanding. Should that happen, the government will have no option but to provide funds to buy additional aircraft in order to make up for the imbalance caused by this induction into the PAF. The IAF has already submitted a proposal for inducting a squadron each of the Mirage-2000 and the MiG-29.

A tempting option is to reduce the force level of the IAF and make it into a leaner and meaner force. This would mean compelling the IAF to think carefully about its roles and missions and start taking tough decisions.

But the IAF rules out this option, pointing out that threat perceptions have only increased and not reduced. They point to India's vast border and the huge army which will need air support in case of a war. The only option, according to them, is a more realistic budget in keeping with the security environment that prevails in India's neighbourhood. While the government confines its concerns to the intentions of a foreign government, the armed forces are more concerned with the capabilities of real and potential adversaries. Intentions can be temporary, but capabilities take time to build and are permanent.

Arianespace To Launch INSAT-2C, INSAT-2D

94AS0255F Madras THE HINDU in English
9 Mar 94 p 6

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Bangalore, March 8. The Department of Space and Arianespace have signed an agreement for launching the INSAT-2C and INSAT-2D multipurpose communication satellites being built by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in the second half of 1995 and 1996.

The agreement was signed by the ISRO Chairman, Prof. U.R. Rao, and Arianespace Chairman, Mr. Bigot, in Paris on March 4, according to an ISRO press release issued here this evening.

Arianespace was selected to launch the satellites after a thorough evaluation of request for proposals received from various leading commercial launch services in the international market.

The second generation INSAT satellites were being built by ISRO. INSAT-2A and INSAT-2B, launched on July 10, 1992, and July 23, 1993, by Arianespace, were working 'very satisfactorily' and providing various services.

The INSAT-2C and INSAT-2D, weighing around 2,100 kg each, would add to the capacity available for communications. They would carry 3 KU-band transponders in addition to the C-band, S-band and extended C-band transponders. The C-transponders will have increased power levels that will enhance TV coverage capabilities and business and remote area communication services.

For the first time in the INSAT system, mobile satellite communication services will also be introduced. Using this facility, vehicles fitted with suitable equipment could communicate with their offices or other vehicles while on the move.

INSAT-2C and 2D will not carry meteorological instruments and will have double-sided solar panels providing about 1,600 watts of electric power to operate the equipment on board the satellite.

IRAN

Bill on Judiciary Eliminates Revolution Courts

94LA0142A London KEYHAN in Persian 21 Apr 94 p 1

[Text] The current revolutionary courts throughout the country will be dissolved and then these courts will be formed anew where necessary, at the discretion of the chief of the judiciary. According to a bill that has been approved by the Majles and has become law, dealing with charges such as threatening the nation's domestic and foreign security, warring with God's representatives or corruption on the earth, insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, armed activities and assassinations, destruction of institutions for the purpose of opposing the government, spying for foreigners and crimes related to smuggling and narcotics, will be handled by the revolution courts.

The verdicts by the revolution courts are final except in cases involving execution and stoning to death, Islamic penalties, personal vengeance, confiscation of assets, and blood money in excess of one-fifth of the full blood price. The convicted person can request an appeal, and in this case the judicial proceedings will be turned over to the appeal courts, which will convene in the province centers. Under this law, the general courts must replace all the various existing courts and they will have the jurisdiction to hear penal, civil and nonlitigious cases (non-litigious cases are matters such as appointing guardians for minors and other such things, where the issuance of a verdict will not harm or benefit anyone).

The chief of the judiciary, whose prerogatives have increased under this law, is required within no more than five years of the law's effective date gradually to form the general courts and revolution courts and to create conditions for this law's implementation throughout the

country. From the time of the formation of the general and revolution courts in each judicial precinct, all conflicting laws and regulation in those precincts are void.

Several days before this bill was approved in the Majles, Shushtari, the minister of justice, discussed the "great changes facing Iran's judicial apparatus." He said that all the nation's judges must prepare themselves to implement this law. He said: It took 12 years to prepare this bill.

An informed legislative source who did not want his name disclosed, said: If properly implemented, this law will probably eliminate some of the confusion that now exists in Iran's judicial apparatus. He also mentioned the right to request an appeal on heavy sentences such as execution, stoning and personal vengeance. Although these can be positive steps, the existence of sentences such as stoning to death and confiscation of assets shows the reactionary and worn-out essence of the nation's judicial apparatus. According to him, "warring against God's representatives and corruption on the earth" are cases where there is no specific accusation, just as putting the crime of insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the same level with endangering national security also shows the oppressive essence of the Islamic regime.

He said: One must wait to see if courts such as the special clerical court, the military court, the religiously prohibited crimes court and others will be dissolved or not.

Interior Minister Alters Position on Satellite Dishes

94LA0141A London KEYHAN in Persian
21 Apr 94 pp 1,3

[Text] About 48 hours after decisively declaring that satellite dishes are "illegal" in Iran and ordering the police to collect them, the minister of the interior did a 180-degree turn and said the government still has not made a final decision on this matter and that until this decision has been made no one has the right to make trouble for the owners of these antennas.

Our sources report from Tehran that government agents secretly took aerial photographs from the rooftops of Tehran. After seeing these photographs the leaders of the Islamic Republic realized that there are too many of these antennas for the police to be able to collect them.

Prior to this, the chief of the Police Antismuggling Office threatened owners and importers of this type of antenna "in whatever rank or position they may hold" with "legal" penalties.

The reactions, however, especially from the Majles, were very instructive for the minister of the interior. One deputy accused him of "speaking rashly" and another, noting the 12 years of fruitless struggle against videos, said efforts to collect satellite dishes will not serve the goal of "fighting the cultural invasion."

Various sources estimate the number of satellite dishes in Tehran at between 200,000 and 300,000, and at up to 450,000 throughout Iran.

In an interview with the publication TEHRAN TIMES, 'Ali Mohammad Basharati retracted his harsh words about collecting the satellite dishes and said: Antennas that receive satellite television programming are not illegal, but the government has decided to discuss them in the next month. Therefore, the use of satellite dishes must be approved by the government.

Basharati discussed the things the press wrote about his remarks on collecting these antennas. He added: A commission to include representatives of the Islamic Propaganda Organization and the minister of culture and guidance will set the laws and regulations on the use of satellite dishes. In this interview, Basharati also announced: Until the Council of Ministers makes its announcement and a statement is issued by the Ministry of the Interior on this matter, no one has the right to collect satellite dishes. If someone goes to homes for this purpose, the home owner should report him to the nearest police station. The TEHRAN TIMES wrote that after the minister of the interior announced his opinion that satellite dishes were illegal, it created the worry that there might be trouble for those who use these antennas. The minister of the interior said: The subject of satellite dishes is being studied. It will take a month to get a conclusion from the research that will lead to a decision. The Council of Ministers will announce the final decision.

The TEHRAN TIMES writes: Satellite dishes have been installed extensively on the rooftops in Tehran in the last two years. The minister of the interior said: The Council of Ministers is making a decision on the laws and regulations for the use of satellite dishes, and the Ministry of the Interior will have the responsibility of enforcing them.

Last week 'Ali Mohammad Basharati said: No law is needed to collect satellite dishes. The Ministry of the Interior views them as a form of corruption, like other kinds of pollution and the cultural invasion. Therefore, it will not wait for a law to be approved to collect them from the rooftops. After Basharati's remarks, and in view of the past experiences with assaults on homes by thugs and ruffians, the trouble the revolution guards and committees caused with their intrusions into the homes of Iranians since the beginning of the revolution and the repeated thefts and killings committed by people bearing membership cards in revolution groups, Rafsanjani and others asked him to retract what he said.

Following the minister of the interior's remarks about collecting the satellite dishes, in some cities, including Shiraz, revolution guards and irresponsible individuals went into homes on their own initiative and took the antennas. The next day the confiscated antennas turned up in the markets and were sold at lower prices to others.

After the statements by the minister of the interior on his own initiative about the satellite dishes, and before he retracted his remarks, the general manager of the Police Antismuggling Office announced at a press conference that satellite dishes are a smuggled item and that their owners would be dealt with as smugglers. He said a project called the "Kusar Project" was being prepared under which "an extensive campaign against various kinds of smuggling deals" will begin.

He said since goods that are not listed on the nation's import and export guidelines are considered smuggled goods, satellite dishes, which mostly come into Iran through the northern ports of the Persian Gulf, are subject to this prohibition. "Satellite dishes throughout the country are considered smuggled goods and will be confiscated."

Citing the minister of the interior, he also said: "The minister of the interior, in comments published in the newspapers...said there has been no change in his views as minister of the interior and those of the government concerning the collection of satellite dishes."

However, after the minister of the interior did a 180-degree turn in less than 48 hours, Morteza Nabavi, an influential Majles deputy and editor of the newspaper RESALAT, said in a Majles speech that although viewing some of the programming broadcast by satellite has "bad effects," a "reactionary approach" should not be taken. He called upon the minister of the interior to "speak more deliberately." Addressing the minister of the interior, he said if there is "order with regard to the satellite dishes, there will be no need to collect them." It would have been better, before announcing the decision to collect the satellite dishes, if the minister of the interior had "weighed all the aspects of the matter."

Hojjat ol-Eslam Zadsar, Majles deputy from Jiroft, said concerning this: "Collecting these receivers will solve nothing. It will only have minor short-term effects." He added: "The foreign invasion must not instill fear," because "the religious beliefs of the people will prevent them from dominating us."

It is still not clear whether the minister of the interior said these things on his own initiative or after discussing the matter with the Council of Ministers.

On the other hand, the Majles has also gotten into the fray. It has announced that a law is needed to collect satellite dishes. Therefore, the law must be approved by the Majles and a government edict on this matter is not sufficient.

KEYHAN's sources report from Tehran that after the remarks by the minister of the interior, the government ordered that precise aerial photographs be taken from

the rooftops of Tehran. These photographs showed that there are too many of these antennas for the police to be able to collect them.

Various sources estimate the number of satellite dishes in Tehran at between 200,000 and 300,000, and at up to 450,000 throughout Iran.

Meshkini Endorses Khamene'i as Supreme Marja'
94LA0146A London KEYHAN in Persian
7 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Text] After a relatively short interruption, efforts to elevate 'Ali Khamene'i to the level of source of emulation have begun anew. The new element in this effort is that this time 'Ali Meshkini, Yusef Sane'i, Mohammad Fazel Lankrani, Judari Amoli, and Ebrahimi from Qom Seminary have joined the effort. Before this, Mohammad Yazdi and 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said in Tehran that Khamene'i is qualified in every way to serve as source of emulation. Meanwhile, Ahmad Azer-Qomi, one of the most influential clergymen in the government, says only ambiguous things on this subject.

In a statement published in Iran, 'Ali Meshkini wrote that it is religiously lawful, reasonable, and incumbent on all the Muslims of the world, "both Shiite and Sunni," especially the clergy and the high scholars and all those who want the Islamic revolution to continue, to accept His Excellency as chief theologian and vice regent of the Muslims of the world.

Reacting to 'Ali Meshkini's call, a statement was published in Qom rejecting 'Ali Khamene'i's competence in relation to that call "for reasons of religious law and reason." In this statement, which was distributed secretly in Qom, and a copy of which also reached KEYHAN, "essential problems and objections" were raised against Meshkini's remarks. The statement asks, what position is to be given to Mr. Khamene'i? Is he to be ranked as a person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence, leader of the Islamic Republic or vice regent of the Muslims? If Meshkini wants to rank him as a person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence, two things could happen: He will either consider himself higher than him, "better than him," so to speak, or lower. If he considers himself higher, then asking the people to follow him will be inappropriate, and if he considers himself lower, then in that case a person of lower rank cannot appoint another person to a position of higher rank in independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence. This would be "unworthy innovation, in violation of the current traditions in the seminary centers."

The statement emphasizes that "independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence for Mr. Khamene'i was never approved by the late Imam. If he had considered Mr. Khamene'i qualified, he would have confirmed him in writing or verbally." The statement notes: In those days when Khamene'i was president of the

republic, he said at a Friday prayer sermon at Tehran University: "Whenever Salman Rushdie repents, his sin will be forgiven...." Ayatollah Khomeyni, disturbed, reprimanded him: "Who gave you permission to express your views on these kinds of theological and religious law issues?"

Mr. Khamene'i, chanting that only God has power, said: I am not a person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence. I am a follower of the source of emulation, like His Holiness the Imam's other followers.

The statement says Khomeyni was disturbed not because he disagreed with Khamene'i as a person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence, but because he did not consider him to have the competence of a person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence. Otherwise, "differences among those with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence on matters of religious law and theology is commonplace, and no person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence corrects another for expressing a theological point of view."

As an example the statement cites the case of Ayatollah Montazeri, who repeatedly expressed views contradicting Khomeyni's clear decrees. "Since the Imam considered him to be a person with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence, he never reprimanded him for expressing a conflicting theological point of view..."

The statement says if the intent was to confirm the rank of leader of the Islamic Republic, "this does not require the issuance of a new statement, especially after five years."

However, if the intent was to elevate Khamene'i to the rank of regent, Meshkini should take note that in his book, *A Rejection of the Secrets of A Thousand Years*, Ayatollah Khomeyni said only the imams can exercise regency over the affairs of Muslims, and that "shahs, caliphs, and rulers are not regents." In the same book "he curses those who say that anyone but the chaste imams can exercise regency over the Muslims..."

The statement, addressed to those who issued the order granting Khamene'i the rank of regent in the affairs of Muslims, warns that with acts like this "they are shaking the pillars of Shiite emulation authority" and "they have distorted the truth and then derived his overall position and rank from that."

The statement adds: "Is it possible to address someone whose position is no higher than the third echelon in the clerical hierarchy in some other way, and present him as someone whom all the Muslims of the world must follow and obey, merely by publishing a few announcements and statements?"

Nationwide Deforestation Called Alarming

94LA0147A London KEYHAN in Persian 7 Apr 94 p 4

[Text] Three-fourths of Iran's northern forests have been destroyed in the last 15 years. The transfer of living soil from high ground to the rivers and plains and the rate of sedimentation in the mouths of rivers has become much faster and more evident, and it has not been without effect in creating problems for the coastal cities. If we continue at this rate, the useful forests in northern Iran, which have trees usable in industry, will be destroyed in the next five years. This is part of a report from the monthly publication JAME'E-YE SALEM, published in Tehran, entitled "Iran's Environment," written by Dr. 'Ali Hazuri.

The report's author continues: In the last two years we have seen faster and more extensive soil erosion throughout Iran. However, these events are mostly happening in areas where there were formerly forests or suitable plant cover and have now become bare, such as the heights of Gilan, Mazandaran, Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari, and Doshmanziari in western Fars.

The rate of sedimentation at dams has increased and no solution has been found. Even in places where resources come to hand suddenly and with the help of nature, there is nothing we can do.

In the year 1371 [21 March 1992-20 March 1993] the water levels at Iran's dams were much lower than in the year 1370 [21 March 1991-20 March 1992]. For example, at the Zayandehrud Dam it was about seven meters lower. As a result of the falling water level, a great volume of the sedimentation at the mouth of the dam reservoir rose out of the water and could have been removed with ordinary equipment. Clearly, the readiness to do this task did not exist and no work was done.

Pastures and Fields Overrun

An important part of Iran's fields and pastures has been destroyed in the last 30 years because of the increased population, the spread of the cities and the establishment of factories, warehouses, and military bases. Even now, instead of building these kinds of installations on unsuitable land, they are using best lands for this purpose. For example, the metal foundry plant, was built next to the city of Asfarin, was allocated the best agricultural land next to the city. After its construction, this plant took over almost all the irrigated land adjacent to the city, and even the city itself is threatened by the creation of pollution. The day when cheap fuel is no longer available for these factories and they are faced with closure, their land will also be of no use, and they will be absorbed by the rapid expansion of the cities and the population explosion.

In his report, the author also discusses the destruction of forests in other parts of Iran in recent years.

There is no small number of other areas in Iran that have lost their plant cover in recent years. The Doshmanziari area, which was completely forested in the year 1357 [21

March 1978-20 March 1979], has now lost perhaps two-thirds of its trees. In a trip there last summer, I did not recognize many areas I had seen before. I even needed a guide to identify the area and the likely limits of areas I knew, and the soil erosion and the destruction of the environment in this region is also evident.

The stripping of Iran's pastures is an obvious phenomenon, which anyone can see throughout Iran. This is also the result of the population increase, including the tribal population, and greater need for livestock products.

Sounding of Alarms

The author of the report on Iran's environment discussed the death of Iran's green forests, pastures and agricultural fields, and the extinction of animals such as the elephant of southern Iran, the lion throughout the south and east of Iran, the tiger in Mazandaran, and the deer of Azerbaijan. According to him, these were not destroyed by the earthquake, but rather when many Iranians in these years obtained firearms and shot them with bullets. Of course, there was even more savage treatment of the boar herds in Lorestan and Mazandaran.

He also warns about the stripping of pastures and increasing air pollution. He said: The aggregate of the factors mentioned, along with poverty, ignorance and illiteracy, inability to tell the difference between immediate and long-term profits, and to understand the earth as the cradle of humanity, the spread of profiteering and rapacious production, which has little by little had its effects on agriculture and animal husbandry and entails indifference to nature, sound the alarm for a healthy life in Iran's environment.

The pollution of bodies of water, even important ones like Zayandehrud, dumping poisons such as cyanide into the river, the death of ancient beliefs about keeping water pure, the dumping of garbage into the water by government agents, the disappearance of ugliness in polluted water, the flow of sewage, sometimes in a city like Masjed-e Soleyman, rapacious use of resources in such a way that, for example all the farms and rural areas surrounding the Sar Cheshmeh Copper Mines (from Miduk to the north of it to Pariz to the south of it) are threatened with destruction, do not indicate a bright future for the environment of Iranians.

This is no longer anything like freedom or human rights for two sides to negotiate, for one to say it exists and the other to say it does not. The reality is naked and dangerous. The small deserts and plains, which can now be seen throughout the province of Fars to the shores of the southern sea, were formerly forest. There were once wild oak and fig forests throughout the province of Khorasan and the province of Sistan va Baluchestan. During the Sassanian period they harvested cochineal from these trees and cochineal was known as the color of Khorasan. Iran was verdant, the deserts were few and the people of Iran were comfortable.

New Wave of Price Hikes Said Threatening Economy

94LA0148A London KEYHAN in Persian
21 Apr 94 pp 1,4

[Text] Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic, who has recently (the last time was in his New Year's message to Iranians inside the country) been describing the economic situation as bright and rosy, in his Friday prayer sermon of 26 Farvardin (15 April) spoke of "strange injustices" and "the lack of health in the nation's economy." He said this abnormal situation is the result of the subsidies the government is paying to meet society's consumer needs.

Rafsanjani said: Overall, the government is paying 600 billion tumans, or in other words, one-fifth of the total general budget, as subsidies. In this figure, revenues from oil sales that could have been obtained at the OPEC price (\$13 per barrel) but were not, were not included. Rafsanjani noted that in Iran 1.4 million barrels of oil and 800,000 barrels of gasoil is consumed daily and provided to the consumer at the cost of production. He said: "We have no revenue from it" and that the money collected is only enough to meet the costs of refining, shipping, and distribution.

Rafsanjani divided government subsidies into the "unjust" and "just" categories and said: The classes with high incomes use some subsidies in the same way that the low-income classes use them, and this is not "just."

In the midst of this, the newspapers supporting continued subsidies write that since 80 percent of the people of Iran are living below the poverty line, 16 percent of the budget is being spent "in the right direction," and only 4 percent of it reaches the wealthy in the form of subsidies.

In any case, the elimination of subsidies will mean that a new wave of high prices will engulf Iran's society.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: While in France the government has an annual income of \$40 billion from energy, the Islamic Republic of Iran sells oil products to consumers at the cost of production, and it derives no revenue from it.

Rafsanjani said: Not counting the price of oil, every year 600 billion tumans is spent on subsidies, and this is one-fifth of the nation's total budget. The president of the Islamic Republic said: Most of the subsidies are spent on basic goods such as wheat, sugar, vegetable shortening, rice, and meat. This comes to 300 billion tumans and is half the government's total subsidies.

He said these kinds of subsidies are a kind of "oppression" to the nation because of the fact that they are used the same way by both rich and poor.

"Unfortunately," he said, "we perpetrate this oppression that spends the public's money for people who do not need it."

While enumerating the subsidized items, Rafsanjani said: The government pays 40 billion tumans to the Imam's Aid Committee, 40 billion tumans to the Martyr Foundation, 5.5 billion tumans to insurance for "vulnerable" classes, and 1.5 billion tumans to help former prisoners of war. He said this help is of the "just" type.

He said the subsidies for bread and fuel are among the "unjust" ones, because both rich and poor use them the same way.

Rafsanjani gives 21 billion tumans in aid for the government's pilgrimage trip, but he said nothing about whether that is just or not. The pilgrimage, according to the scripture, is incumbent upon those who are "able" to make it.

On the other hand the Tehran media, which is opposed to eliminating the subsidies, wrote in criticism of what Rafsanjani said that in view of the fact that 80 percent of the people are below the poverty line, 16 percent of the subsidies reach the needy classes. The same newspaper writes, based on the president of the republic's analysis, in the new year one must expect higher prices and more pressure on the people (the same 80 percent) without anything being done to counteract this pressure. They conclude: "Of course if the elimination of subsidies leads to job creation and production, it is possible the people will welcome it."

However, economic experts do not consider the creation of jobs and incomes for the vulnerable classes to be that likely in today's Iran.

Population Explosion Said Threatening Nation's Future

94LA0149A London KEYHAN in Persian 21 Apr 94 p 4

[Text] The newspaper SALAM, quoting IRNA, printed a report on the excessive population increase in Iran and sounded the alarm. This report, which was prepared based on the Islamic Republic's official statistical sources, does a good job of showing the dark future the excessive population increase has spread before Iran. Below is a summary of this report for your consideration:

In the last 90 years, meaning from 1280 [21 March 1901-20 March 1902] to 1370 [21 March 1991-20 March 1992], Iran's population has increased sixfold, and it is predicted that in the next 20 years it will increase to more than 120 million. According to the 1370 census, Iran's population was 55,837,163, and in the last two years this figure has exceeded 57 million.

Iran, with a population growth rate of 3.9 percent, had the highest population growth rate until a few years ago. The nation's population officials say that the population growth rate has now decreased to 2.3 percent (the experts believe that such a decrease in the population growth rate is not possible in a few years. Various sources in the

Islamic Republic give differing statistics on Iran's population growth rate. Experts estimate this rate at between 3 and 3.5 percent).

According to this report, the number of women of child-bearing age will increase from 13,628,000 in the year 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994] to 16,138,000 in the year 1377 [21 March 1998-20 March 1999]. Likewise, 6.5 births are expected for each Iranian woman, which according to the report, "unfortunately" equals the rate in the African continent and in some developing nations.

Another problem in Iranian society is the extraordinarily youthful mix of its population. Based on the 1370 census, the population between zero and 14 years of age totaled 24,723,000, and counting those born in the years 1371 [21 March 1992-20 March 1993] and 1372, one must add another 2 million to this number. That is, more than 26 million of Iran's 57 million people are between zero and 14 years of age.

Based on the figures in the National Statistical Annual, 55 percent of Iran's population is younger than 19 (meaning 40,640,000), and 62 percent of the nation's population is under 25. The average age for men is 23.41 years, the average age for women is 21.83 years, and the average age for the entire population is 22.13 years. Population experts cite illiteracy, the lack of social welfare and ignorance of the effects of increasing families as some of the causes of the population increase in Iran. These experts believe that even if the country's population growth rate completely stopped today, it would take at least 20 years to compensate for the population increases of the last 15 years, meaning the era of the government of the Islamic Republic.

Contrary to the way it appears in Tehran, where the women are working as shopkeepers, laborers, and merchants more than in the past, official statistics show that the number of women working in the 1355 [21 March 1976-20 March 1977] census was 1.2 million, whereas in the year 1365 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987] that number decreased to 970,000, and yet in the last 15 years the number of women in the country increased by more than 12 million.

To see the effects of this rapid growth on the people of Iran in the next 20 years, IRNA's report studied food and agriculture and their relationship to the population increase. It wrote: For suitable cultivation in the country, at least 4,000 mm of rainfall is required, but in Iran the average rainfall does not exceed 250 mm, and only 34 percent of that is actually used due to improper utilization, while the rest is wasted.

According to a statement from the Environmental Protection Organization, an average of 4.5 percent of the northern forests is lost every year. This means that theoretically in 23 years there will be no trace of a forest in the north. A total of 1.5 million tons of the best and most appropriate arable soil, which is equal to 400,000 hectares [ha] of the nation's fruitful soil, is eroded as a result of excessive grazing, and if something is not done the erosion of fruitful soil will triple.

Likewise, close to one-fourth of the nation's area is taken up by the Lut Plain, the Kavir Plain and other barren lands, while forests only make up 1 percent of the nation's total area.

In view of the nation's 12.5 million ha of agricultural land, this much land can only feed 50 percent of the nation's current population, and the rest of the food must be imported. Currently the annual per-capita consumption of wheat is at least 230 kg, and the entire nation's annual consumption of wheat is 13 million tons.

If we accept the Ministry of Agriculture's statistic that 10 million tons of wheat was produced last year, Iran is currently faced with a shortage of 3 million tons of wheat, which is imported using foreign exchange resources.

If we assume that per-capita consumption will remain fixed over the next 20 years, then at the end of that time with a population of 120 million the country will need 27 million tons of wheat. Even if the area of arable land is not reduced, Iran will be short 14 million tons of wheat.

If the price of wheat remains at its current level of \$250, about \$4 million of the nation's foreign exchange credits will be needed annually just to import wheat.

The minister of agriculture said in this regard: It cannot be predicted when the nation will become self-sufficient in wheat production.

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